POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION

EDITED · BY HAROLD FURNISS

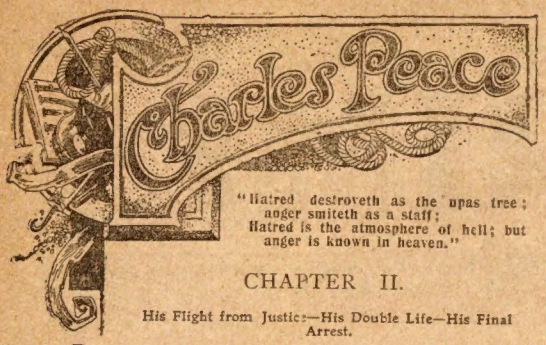
FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT

ONE · PENNY

THE STRUGGLE WITH PEACE IN THE GARDEN.

Vol. I.—No. 2.



"Hatred destroyeth as the upas tree; anger smiteth as a staff; Hatred is the atmosphere of hell; but anger is known in heaven."

CHAPTER II.

His Flight from Justice—His Double Life—His Final Arrest.

AS soon as Wilson heard the pistol shot and saw the figure of Peace scrambling over the fence he rushed off and informed the police. Constable Ward was soon on the spot, but in the darkness it was impossible to guess the actual route the murderer had taken. However, he did his best, and followed the imaginary path as well as he could, but in vain; Peace had vanished.

At daybreak next morning Ward was on the alert, and started off across the meadows in search of footprints. There had been a heavy dew, and the marks of the feet of those who had assisted him on the previous night could be plainly discerned. By degrees the tracks became fewer in number as one after another of the searchers had tailed off, and at last only two steps could be seen. These were not Ward's own footsteps, and he concluded that they must be those of the murderer. He followed them across several meadows, and at last noticed a small white packet on the ground. He instantly picked it up, and examined its contents, when, to his astonishment, he found that the parcel was nothing less than a bundle of letters, some white, some pink, but all bearing the address, "C. Peace, Esq.," and among them was an even more important piece of incriminating evidence—the very card Mr. Dyson had thrown over the wall at Darnall.

From the contents of the letters it was clear that Peace was carrying on an intrigue with several different ladies, but though the assertion has been made, there is no proof that Mrs. Dyson was one of them.

By this time the sun had risen, and the dew vanished, so that it was impossible for Ward to further follow the tracks. He, therefore, returned, and gave the letters over to Inspector Bradbury.

Descriptions of Peace were circulated everywhere; detectives were on the alert throughout the whole of England; rewards were offered for any news of his whereabouts. But all in vain. Peace had disappeared as if he had been spirited away.

The customary inquest was held, and a verdict of wilful murder "against Charles Peace" was returned. But that was little satisfaction, inasmuch as they could not catch him.

Now, what had become of our hero? Well, as soon as he had got clear of the fields, he made for the Endcliffe district, and thence walked to Broomhill Tavern, where he had a little refreshment. From there he took a cab and drove to Church Street, where he saw his mother, and chatted to her for about half-an-hour, apparently thinking nothing of the fact that he had just shot a man; for though Peace himself declared afterwards that he had no idea he had killed Mr. Dyson, his skill with a revolver was such that we cannot believe that he could have missed his aim at a couple of yards' distance.

When he left his mother he went to the Attercliffe Railway Station, and took a ticket for Rotherham, where he got out of the train, waited for another, and booked for Hull, but by mistake he stepped into the wrong carriage, and was carried on to York, where he hid in the yard of the Railway Hotel till the following morning, when he took the first train for Beverley. From there he went to Cottingham, and on to Hull.

His wife and family were then stopping at 27, Collier Street in the latter town, and he spent the morning with them. He had not been home for a fortnight, but as he was in the habit of staying away at times they paid little attention to that. While he was talking to them in the kitchen he heard a knock at the door, and an official asked:

"Does a young man of the name of Peace live here?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Peace, who had opened the door, and, imagining that it was her son the two strangers were referring to, added, "He has gone to Sheffield to see his grandmother."

But Peace recognised the voices of the callers, and, squinting through the keyhole of the kitchen, saw two of the best-known Sheffield detectives; so he crept up the back stairs into his son's bedroom, lifted up the window, crawled on to the sill and got between the two roofs of the building. He had only just gained this place of safety when the detectives searched the house, but, not finding him, went away. This encouraged Peace, and he came out of his place of concealment, covered, of course, with dust and dirt. He went down to the kitchen to wash himself, but scarcely had he commenced when the hated voices were again heard, and he once more beat a hasty retreat to the roof.

A second time the premises were searched, and Peace's heart was in his mouth as he listened to the conversation of the detectives standing within a yard of his hiding-place. His wife was sobbing bitterly, for she did not know what her husband was wanted for, nor did the detectives tell her. At last the police departed, and Peace ventured downstairs again, where he bade his family good-bye, and, as they thought, went away; but, as a matter of fact, he retired into temporary seclusion again, and remained there till nightfall, when he slid down a waterspout into a neighbour's back garden, boldly walked into that house, and informed the astonished woman that he had to select that method of

Watched the guests go in.

flight because the police wanted to arrest him for deserting his wife. Luckily, the lady in question detested Mrs. Peace, and had had many passages at arms with her over the fence, so she hid him in her house and gave him some tea, and further made arrangements with another neighbour to allow

Peace to scramble into her yard and go out through her front door.

This he did, and ran down Collier Street towards the Fair ground, but, thinking that part was a little public, he crossed Hull by back streets till he was about a mile from his proper home, and there took lodgings for three weeks.

We have said that he was an insignificant-looking man, but we have not so far mentioned that he had the most marvellous power of changing his face, and he hoped by that means to evade capture. The first thing necessary was clothes, so, the same evening, he broke into the nearest tailor's and annexed suitable garments.

Returning to his lodgings, he changed his attire and burnt his discarded vesture. He now felt that he could walk about in safety; so in the daytime he strolled round the better parts of Hull, and at night revisited the same districts. By a strange coincidence the police of Hull were daily apprised of burglaries, and in most instances money or jewels were the only things stolen.

After three weeks Peace thought that he had sufficient capital, and there was not much more left in that town to take; so he moved to Doncaster, where his presence is still much regretted, for among other things he stole an antique silver cup—the only existing specimen—and thus ruined one of the best collections in the world. Having in this way achieved fame, he moved to London, arriving at King's Cross in the evening, crossed to Paddington, and took a ticket for Bristol. It was not till he reached this latter city that he learned that a reward was offered for his apprehension. The villas round Clifton afforded him pleasing occupation at nights, and he filled up his time amassing wealth until the end of January, when he moved to Bath. All his ill-gotten gains were sent to his wife, who was then passing under the name of Mrs. Ward.

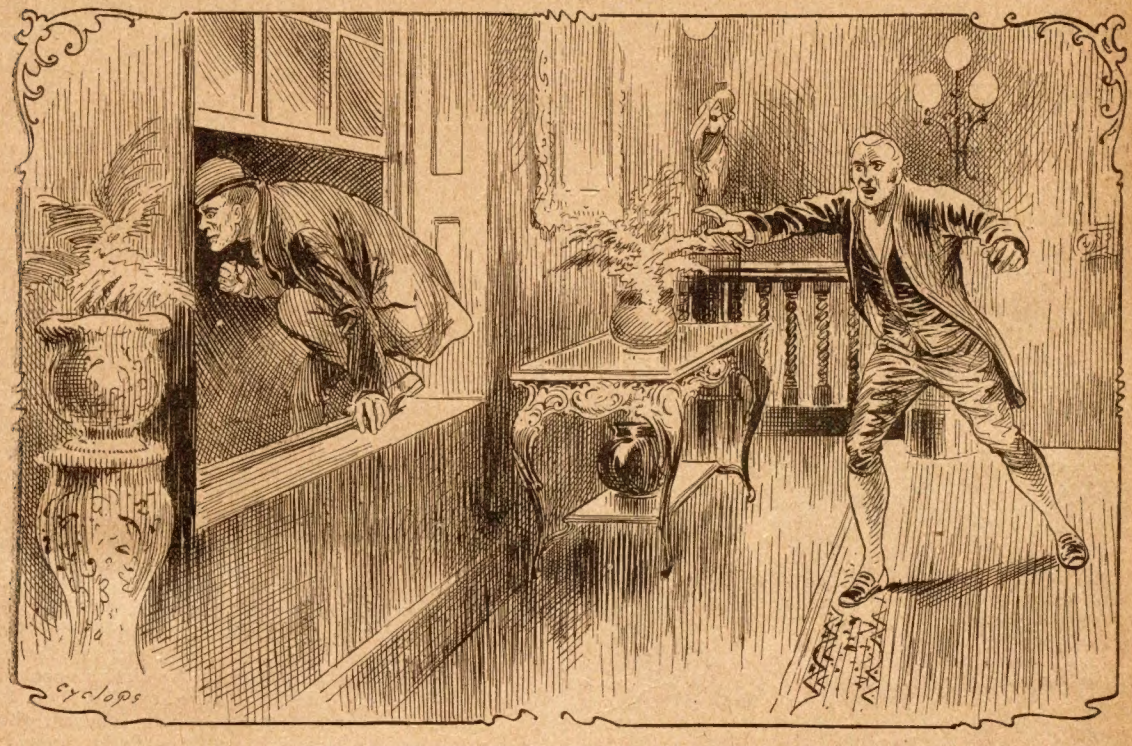
From Bath he went to Oxford, and actually travelled in the same carriage with a detective-sergeant who was on his way to Stafford Assizes, and chatted with him until they reached Didcot at midnight, where there was a wait of four hours.

Peace and the policeman slept together in the waiting-room, and next morning continued their journey to Oxford, where they parted. The burglary business in Oxford was depressed, and the professional thought Birmingham afforded a better field for his operations, so he went to the midland centre for five days, and paid nocturnal visits to several mansions. From there he moved to Derby, where he stopped for a week, living directly opposite the police-station and making friends with the officers.

When Derby could afford no more loot he went to Nottingham, and there found several country houses which required his attention. Nottingham was an excellent centre, and, to quote his own words, he "worked the towns round about."

Now, it was a great principle with Peace never to outstay his welcome, and he soon felt sure that the Nottingham district was getting a little tired of him. A change was necessary. The fatal fascination which the scene of the murder has for all murderers made him pay a flying trip to Sheffield, and he visited Banner-Cross. As he passed the Highfield Police Station, Inspector Bradbury was standing at the door, and Peace had the effrontery to wish him good-night. That done, he entered a house in the immediate neighbourhood, and left the richer by six pounds in gold and a pocketful of jewellery.

It was while our hero was at Nottingham that he first met Mrs. Thompson; her original name was Susan Gray, and it is said that she was married to a commercial traveller named Bailey, but she discarded him, and eventually lived with Peace. The police in the district were continually pestered with accounts of robberies, and at last got a clue which led them to Peace's lodgings. The burglar was in bed with his paramour when the detectives called, and, saying that he was a pedlar, he persuaded the officers to go downstairs while he dressed, when he would produce his pack for examination. Believing his statement, they did so, and waited below for half an hour, but Peace never appeared. They returned to the upper room, and there was no prisoner.



JUST AS THE SERVANT REACHED HIM PEACE SPRANG OUT.

The window was heavily barred and the irons were but six inches apart. Incredible as it may seem, Peace had managed to squeeze through them, dropped fifteen feet on to a shed below, and escaped in the darkness. His movements for the next fortnight are unknown, but it is probable that he prowled about Nottingham waiting for an opportunity to meet his paramour, for we next hear of him at Hull, whither he had conveyed Mrs. Thompson, and he introduced her to his wife, Mrs. Ward, who does not seem to have greatly objected to her husband transferring his affections to another woman.

Mrs. Ward was the mother of ten children, and she admitted to her rival that Peace was not the father of all of them. During this short visit to Hull, Peace and his mistress did not stop in the Collier's Street house, but for safety's sake he took apartments in Albany Road with a police-sergeant, who frequently chatted to him about the prospects of catching the Banner-Cross murderer. Our friend gave the sergeant the best advice he could offer, and said that he hoped he would gain the reward.

Through the Conservat ry.

Think of that sergeant's feelings in after years when he learned that for a month he had been landlord to the very man he wanted to arrest!

From Hull Peace and Mrs. Thompson journeyed to London, and for the first night slept in Whitechapel; from there they went to Royal Street, Lambeth, where they remained for six weeks, passing as Mr. and Mrs. Thompson. Business during this time was brisk—for burglary was a business with Peace—and soon he collected sufficient to move into more commodious quarters, and he took a house in Stangate Street, Lambeth. A moment's thought will show one what the value of Peace's thievings must have been, for besides the Ward contingent with the house to be kept up at Hull, he had to support also his mother and his mistresses, who were legion.

After a few months Mrs. Thompson's society seemed to have palled on the attractive Charley, and he required further company; so he despatched a note to Hull, and next day there arrived Mrs. Ward, her son, Willie, her daughter, Anna Jane, and a young man named Bolsover, who was then engaged to Anna. Mrs. Ward is generally considered to have been Peace's actual wife, but she told Mrs. Thompson that she was his mother as well, much to the latter's surprise. There must have been a healthy tone of morality about the whole ménage.

The Stangate Street house was a little too small for all these occupants, and the party moved to Greenwich, two residences being taken next to each other, the one occupied by Peace and Mrs. Thompson, the second by Mrs. Peace (or Ward) and her children, with Bolsover. Round about the district, as was usual, frequent burglaries were complained of. Three establishments are expensive.

It may be asked: Where did Peace dispose of his spoils? The thief without the receiver is useless. Well, at first he dealt with several Jews about Whitechapel, but later he found that he was not getting full value for the "objets de vertu" which he invariably annexed, so, save for common jewellery or ponderous plate whose only worth lay in the weight of metal or in particular gems, he sold his plunder to collectors and connoisseurs, none of whom, of course, dreamt that he was other than a real expert. It is a remarkable fact that Peace's knowledge of curios was almost unexceptional, and by the sense of touch he could tell a genuine article from an imitation. Those things which he left behind were seldom authentic.

His methods of work were peculiar. At the outset of his criminal career he recognised that there is more danger to be feared from one accomplice than from the whole police force; consequently, he invariably worked alone. Later in the day assistants may have helped to remove the swag, but they never knew where it came from. Did the modern burglar work in this fashion, detection would be difficult. About this time Peace had an extraordinary venture which very nearly laid him by the heels.

He did not confine his operations solely to his immediate neighbourhood, but flitted from place to place, wherever the harvest was richest, and we would naturally expect to hear of him in the West End of London. Out in Kensington Peace one day heard that a fashionable party was to take place; he surveyed the building in Vynoe Square, and was satisfied that he would be well repaid for a visit.

After dark he loitered about the square, and watched the guests go in, while he formulated a plan of attack. When the party were at dinner the burglar crept up at the back of the house, scaled a wall, entered through a passage window, and softly went upstairs, feeling sure that in the bedrooms of such a house he would find ample loot. He was not disappointed. Rings, lockets, and money lay on the dressing-table, and he deftly swept them into his pocket. As he was retreating, and had reached the first floor, he was surprised by the appearance of a burly footman, who made a rush for him. Quick as lightning, Peace threw up the nearest window and glanced out. There was a roof just below, and he thought it was an outhouse.

Just as the servant reached him the burglar sprang out. There was a crash, a sound of broken glass, and a startled cry. Peace had fallen some fifteen feet through the roof of a conservatory. The noise brought the guests out of the dining-room, but no one was to be seen.

Bruised, bleeding, partially stunned, Peace had never for a moment lost his presence of mind. The conservatory door was nothing to him; he was over the neighbouring walls in a twinkle, and the householder had to deplore his ruined greenhouse as well as the loss of his goods. Avoiding the well-lit streets, Peace worked his way to the lower part of Chelsea, and there entered a common lodging-house—a resort of thieves. A lady's ring was sufficient bribe to the proprietor, and the criminal was permitted to wash himself and dress his wounds, after which he went home.

Greenwich was not as convenient a centre as Peace could have wished, and accordingly he made up his mind to move to Peckham, from which quarter he could with ease rob the wealthy city folk who dwelt in the southern suburbs.

The house he took was No. 5, East Terrace, Evelina Road. It was the last in the street, and was bordered on

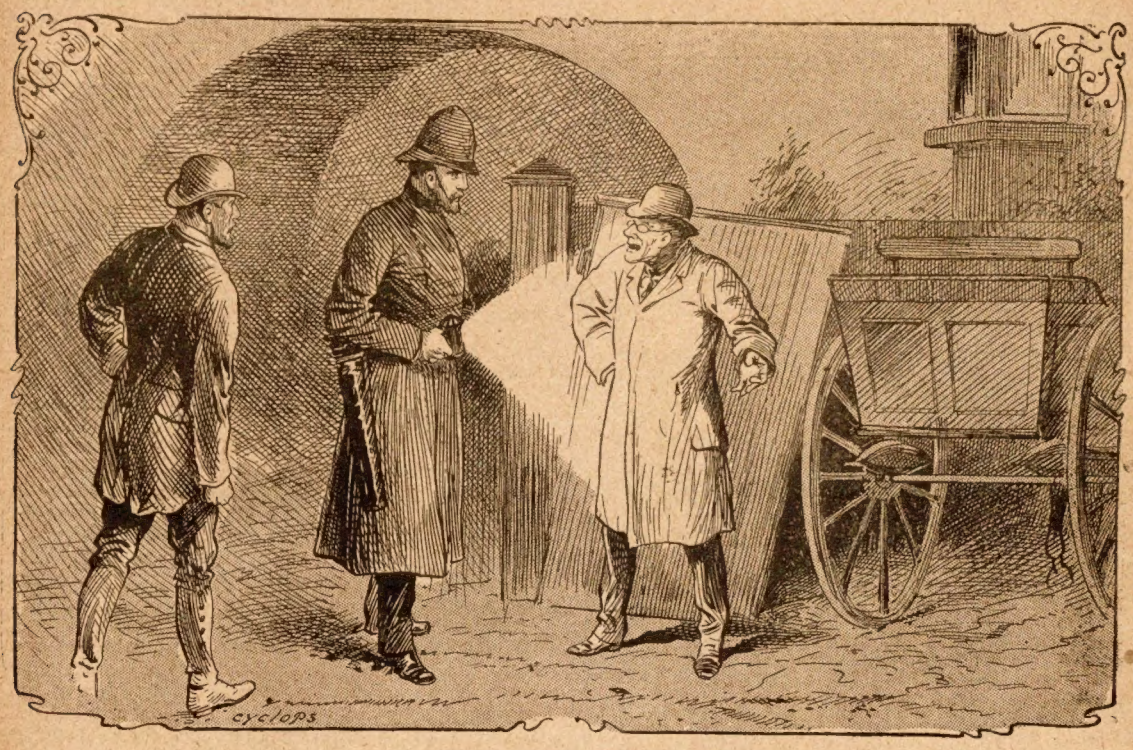
one side by a hedge dividing his grounds from the railway running to Nunhead. The premises were furnished with numerous doors, so that escape at any moment was easy. Not wishing the people of Greenwich to know his new address, Peace arranged with a Peckham greengrocer to remove his furniture, which was done. But among the goods transported by Mr. Cleaves were not the costly services of plate or valuable pictures which were afterwards found in the house. These Peace thought were not suitable to his apparent station, and might excite suspicion, so he had them secretly forwarded to his new residence.

In the course of a few weeks the neighbours began to call upon Mr. Thompson (otherwise Peace), who proclaimed himself to be a gentleman of independent means. He kept a pony and trap; his rooms were luxuriously furnished; he had in the house two women, one called Mrs. Thompson, the other Mrs. Ward; yet he kept no servants. His friends thought this peculiar, but he said he was an inventor, and adjoining premises, a milkman. To the policeman Peace explained that he was engaged upon a remarkable invention, together with a Mr. Brion, and that it was necessary, for fear of premature discovery, that they should work at night.

"In fact," he added, "those boxes contain part of the invention. But come inside, and I will show you the smaller model. Perhaps you might like a drink."

So constable and criminal entered the house, and Peace provided him with whiskey, and from a long, narrow box produced his first invention. The officer was deeply interested, and, thanking his host, withdrew, after first helping to replace the broken gate. Another night the dairyman, returning at two o'clock, saw the "independent gentleman" digging in his garden, and was a little astonished, but the redoubtable Charles called out to him that as he could not sleep he was digging mould for potting purposes.

It was remarkable that although the lamps at No. 5, East Terrace were extinguished very early in the evening the



TO THE POLICEMAN PEACE EXPLAINED.

was deeply engaged in perfecting a device by which sunken ships may be raised.

He was a genial host, and a most accomplished musician. His collection of stringed instruments alone was extraordinary—how he obtained them we can easily guess—while as a violinist he was, perhaps, the first amateur of his day.

His fondness for animals was remarkable, and he possessed thirty-two guinea pigs, some goats, cats, dogs, canaries, fowls and pigeons, besides his pony, Tommy, to which he was devoted: indeed, he had good reason to be, since Tommy was his silent partner.

In the daytime, Peace, accompanied by one of his ladies, would drive round, and if he saw a likely house, he would make a rapid survey of the surroundings, with a view to calling later. At night the hard-worked animal was again harnessed, driven to a spot near to the selected house, and, in the small hours of the morning, returned with the booty.

On several occasions Peace barely escaped capture. One night, for instance, while driving into his premises the pony shied, and knocked the gate off its hinges. The noise attracted the attention of a constable and the occupant of the sounds of wheels were heard throughout the night, and not infrequently the police on duty noticed lights about three in the morning. More than once a constable has knocked at the door, fearing that burglars might be afoot, but has been assured that Peace was pursuing his scientific researches.

Towards the middle of 1878 the pony died, and Peace was sorely put about to provide another. It would not do for the "gentleman of independent means" to sell any of his furniture; his musical instruments and nick-nacks he could not bear to part with; the proceeds of his burglaries were all invested, and immediate ready money was a necessity; so he had resort to the following audacious expedient.

He strolled in to see the milkman, and said how sorry he was to notice that his neighbour's stables were so damp. "I love animals," said Peace, "and now that my own poor Tommy has died I can let you put your pony in my stable, where he will be comfortable, nice and warm." The neighbour was very grateful, for Peace refused to make any charge, and that night the pony was installed in its new quarters, which was knee-deep with nice clean litter.

Surely under these circumstances the dairyman might

expect his animal to be more lively, but, on the contrary, it became more jaded every day. Several times in the morning he noticed that his beast was splashed with mud, and threatened to kick the stableman for not grooming the horse over night. Giles protested that he had done so, and it was only when the master himself had curried and bedded down his pony and found it unkempt the following morning that his suspicions were aroused, though he did not like to say anything.

As a matter of fact, the poor pony was doing double work; by day it carried milk and its master, by night it bore the burglar and his booty. But just as the innocent milk purveyor was deciding to make use of his own stable again a sudden check occurred which terminated his animal's extra labours.

Standing in St. John's Park, Blackheath, was the house of a Mr. James Alexander Burness. The gentleman was a man of property, and the contents of his residence were such as to tempt any burglar. Peace on one of his tours had

Girling whispered to him.

noticed the place, and was determined, when a fitting opportunity occurred, to pay it a visit.

He went down once or twice and surveyed the premises from all sides, so as to secure means of retreat if necessary. In everything that Peace did he was most thorough, and he carefully thought out every possible move in his proposed crimes. At last, when he had studied the situation and mastered it, he felt that the time for operation had arrived.

On Ocober 9, 1878, Peace remained indoors—the "independent, respectable Mr. Thompson"—but at nightfall he set out to make his living by plunder. He reached St. John's Park, Blackheath, and strolled casually through the neighbourhood, carefully noting the position and movements of the police. Had he been met by any of his Peckham acquaintances he would never have been recognised, for the garments he wore were of a different cut to those in his daily use.

As the night wore on he watched more carefully, and when all was still he slipped into the grounds of Mr. Burness's house. He trotted round to the back, and, producing from his sleeve a powerful crowbar, known as a "jemmy," he inserted it in the crack of the back door and gently tried it. The door creaked a little bit, and Peace knew by experience that it would be a noisy one to open; so he left it, and went to a scullery window, which yielded readily enough, and he stepped into the house.

Creeping gently, he passed from the scullery into the kitchen, and, finding that the key was turned in the door, he picked the lock. Then he commenced to make a tour through the lower rooms of the house, selecting unconsidered trifles here and there; amongst them was a silver flask, a bankbook, several cheques, and a letter-case.

He could move as quietly as a cat. Having annexed what he thought fit in the back rooms he moved to the front, and struck a match with which to look round. While on his beat in St. John's Park the sudden gleam of light coming through the drawing-room window in the early hours of October 10 caught the eye of Police-constable Robinson, who stood still and watched. Presently the little spark showed up again. Peace had struck another lucifer. Robinson grew suspicious, and went off to procure assistance. He had only gone a yard or two when he met Constable Girling, and the two officers went back to watch the house.

First in one room and then in another they saw the flicker, and knew that they had to deal with a burglar. A high wall surrounded the grounds, and Robinson climbed on to Girling's back and got on to the top of it. Just at that moment Police-sergeant Brown came up, making his nightly tour of the district under his charge. Girling whispered to him the particulars, and he walked round to the front door and rang the bell. In an instant the light was extinguished, and Peace sprang out of the window on to the lawn. Strapped round his wrist was a heavy revolver.

From his perch Robinson saw the burglar, and leapt into the grounds to give chase. He had almost reached the fugitive when Peace turned round suddenly, and pointed the revolver straight at his head, crying out:

"Keep off! or, by God, I will shoot you!"

Robinson replied: "You had better not!" and still advanced.

Immediately Peace fired two shots, both of which passed over the constable's head. Still the plucky officer advanced, as a third missile whistled by his ear. Then the policeman rushed at Peace, as the latter fired a fourth shot, and closed with him. Peace struggled, and to subdue him Robinson hit him a blow in the face with his left hand. Then the ruffian took deliberate aim and fired at his assailant, shouting out:

"I'll settle you, you blackguard, this time!"

The bullet struck the officer on the left arm, just below the shoulder, and carried some of the cloth of his tunic right through the wound, grazing the bone but not fracturing it, then went through the drawing-room window and flattened against the wall. A terrible fight now took place. Wounded as he was, the constable would not let go his prisoner.

"You devil! I'll give you something else!" shrieked Peace, and tried to reach his hip-pocket, where he kept a murderous sheath knife; but Robinson was too quick, grappled with him, and flung him on the ground.

Still Peace wrestled, foaming at the mouth and swearing most hideously. At this juncture Girling and Brown, who had heard the shots, rushed up, and the sergeant struck the scoundrel on the head with his truncheon. Still the conflict went on, Robinson and Peace rolling over and over in the mud, while the others struck whenever they could do so with safety.

At last Sergeant Brown got a grip of Peace's legs, and then the fight was ended. Robinson was sick and faint with loss of blood, and therefore handed his capture over to his colleagues, and Peace, who refused his name, was taken to the police-station.

BLAKESLEY,

THE BLOODTHIRSTY.

HOW a Young Ruffian freed himself from parental control, and trod the downward path.

"Anger and jealousy can no more bear to lose sight of their objects than love."

GEORGE ELIOT—*The Mill on the Floss*

PART I.

ON September 21, in the year 1841, when the banks of the Thames on either side bore the swaying multitude of sight-seers who had congregated to inaugurate the opening of the London and Brighton Railway, an odd variation to the day's event took place within an echo of London Bridge on the Middlesex side, and a stone's-throw of the Tower of London.

Robert Blakesley was a young married man of twenty-seven years of age, who had been initiated into commercial life in the cloth trade by his father, who carried on business in Basinghall Street, City. A young man, of a mild expression of countenance, and one who had received an enviable start in his career, it would have been impossible to trace any sign of an homicidal tendency in such a person, and the shrinking, abject figure which he cut at a later period in his life, as our story will tell, could only excite astonishment how such an individual could have premeditated and enacted a crime of atrocity such as that which startled the world on the above-mentioned date.

There were early indications of instability and indefiniteness of purpose in the character of Blakesley, and one ill-advised act after another led him on, by rapid stages, into a prodigality, not too apparent in outward semblance, from which he never retrieved. Tearing himself away from the parental will, to pursue a course where domination and tender and solicitous guidance should not interfere with inclinations which could lead to no good, the young man sought to carve out a path for himself, with what fatal results we shall see before long.

One of his first enterprises was to marry a wife, and his personal attractions principally aided him in his amorous quest—where he exhibited greater sagacity than he displayed in his brief commercial career. Alas! for the too trusting object of his conquest! "The emancipation of slavery from self by love" was not an ethic which could find ready application to the case of the bride of Robert Blakesley, who, in his wooing, may have appropriately recited Michael Angelo:

"Forgive me if I cannot turn away
From those sweet eyes, that are my earthly heaven;
For they are guiding stars, benignly given,
To tempt my footsteps to the upward way."

The "elective affinity," as someone has described the marriage relationship, of the heavy villain of our story, could not have prompted anything so adolescent as that depicted by the inspired writer. And well had it been for Sarah Blakesley and others, could she but have had the prophetic instinct for a brief moment, and that, instead of entering into the partnership created by handcuffs bearing the stamp of the State, she could have spoken in those sentiments of loathing which filled the soul of Juliet at the thought of marriage with Paris:

"Oh! bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,
From off the battlements of yonder tower;
Or walk in thievish ways; or bid me lurk
Where serpents are."

In Eastcheap there was a tavern which boasted the ambitious sign, "The King's Head," at the time with which this narrative is concerned. It is no longer known by that name, and perhaps there is no one at present existent who can point to the modified sign, or perhaps even the site whereon the "King's Head" stood. The landlord of this establishment was one James Burdon, to all appearances a kind-hearted fellow, generous, affable, and much esteemed. His wife well supported him in his business, and the record goes that at least this couple had discerned the true affinity which lies at the root of real affection. Unhappily, the hostess's sister, Sarah, now bound in wedlock to Blakesley, was destined to a far different experience than that of Mrs. Burdon, although the latter, by the same harmful instrument, was soon to realise the mutability of mundane joys.

Immediately before and during the progress of the wedding arrangements, it is pretty clear that Blakesley was industriously engaged in attempting to lay the foundation of a business, and his materials for the ratification of his design were somewhat of the gossamer consistency. Practically speaking, he was actively engaged in the art of "raising the wind." To some extent he succeeded, for it appears that he induced a money-lender to advance him the sum of £30 on a bill of exchange at three months. This beginning admirably facilitated the wedding preparations, and Blakesley, by a show of opulence, was able to create a fair impression upon the host and hostess of the "King's Head," an impression which was accentuated by a display of respectability and circumspection that well accorded with the tastes of his new relatives. He soon established himself in the confidence and esteem of the latter, and owing to the heartiness and geniality of Mr. and Mrs. Burdon, he became fully recognised as a cherished member of the family, enjoying all the privileges of the home, and warmly welcomed whenever he presented himself. With this very desirable confidence consolidated, and being still able to parade his substantiality by the jingling of his necessarily attenuated capital, he made things hum in the neighbourhood of Sevenoaks, where he was interested in the "killing" business. The inverted commas will be better understood by-and-by.

It was as a butcher Blakesley was now deeply engrossed, and however much he may have neglected the opportunity in the prosaic routine in the Basinghall Street establishment, it is pretty clear that his energies were developed to the snapping point at Sevenoaks, and had all things been equal, and all men responsive to the allurements of an adventurer, things would have gone ahead amazingly with the Sevenoaks butcher. But he discovered that then, as now, the genus homo had a remarkable predilection to the policy of shan't! In some respects, however, the enthusiastic slaughterer succeeded, and he must then have had blissful visions of the despatch and dismemberment of the hordes of the bulls of Bashan and re-incarnated swarms of the devil-possessed Gadarenian swine. He had already "taken" a house called Seal, some one and a-half miles from Sevenoaks, to receive his bride, and with the pomp and circumstance attending such surroundings, as suggested by a suburban residence, he ran up a slaughter-house (ominous association!) at a cost of £67, and ran down the builder thereof for time and material devoted to the construction of this ill-fated abattoir.

Simultaneously, ever active in his designs, he ordered from a neighbouring farmer thirty-nine sheep and three lambs as a modest inauguration of his gory divinity. Nothing loth to satisfy so desirable an order, the farmer hastened to deliver the muttons, and had Blakesley been as punctilious in meeting the requirements of the breeder in the trifling matter of cash involved in the transaction, there is no doubt that the "breeder" could have gone along like a zephyr before a sweeping gale of wind. But there was the difficulty. "Render unto Cæsar that which is Cæsar's," was the maxim of Mr. Hodge. But Blakesley could only see the preposterously arbitrary conditions imposed upon him over a miserable handful of quadrupeds, every joint in which—superior and inferior—would be frizzling and sputtering before London domestic fires before twenty-four hours. The fortunate animals, during the parley and argumentation of the principals, enjoyed a respite of three days to vegetate still further on their "native heath," upon which they were destined to triumphantly "place their trotters once more"; and the new slaughter-house, with its appointments, was deprived of at least the first consignment of innocents which had been brought to its threshold.

The perspicacity of Mr. Hodge brought the eyebrows of the builder of the shambles to assume notes of interrogation. Any density which he may have originally allowed to mislead him was dispelled by the coming—and the going—of the sheep. A little reflection ended in the conclusion that Crœsus was not propitious to his patron, and, associating one thing with another, he at once determined upon decisive action, which assumed the form of an execution on the building. This combination of evils drew forth from Blakesley those latent characteristics that were not at all apposite to the gentleness of manner and suavity which he had previously

affected before men in his negotiations with them. His denunciation of the builder were of the most fierce and reckless.

"I should not think it a sin to stab him!" he confided to a neighbour, when discussing his reverses.

Undeterred, however, by these disappointments, and having already caught a glimpse of the goal which he had conjured in his elastic imagination, he sought fresh fields to conquer. The next experiment was the negotiation of a loan of £100 from a Leadenhall Market butcher, and a similar sum from another source, where, in both instances, there were interests which might be benefited by intercourse with the supplicant, with the aid of the proposed subsidies. But, for reasons which can only be conjectured, it would seem that these persons were "not having any," and with stolid inflexibility they negatived the representations submitted to them—lock, stock, and barrel.

Meanwhile, in anticipation of the flow of the Pactolean stream which was forming in the mind of the ambitious adventurer, liabilities were increasing, rival tradesmen, who had vied with each other in the race for the victualling of the Seal ménage, became restive and exigent. Undaunted by these vicissitudes, Blakesley appealed to his brother-in-law, Burdon, now the only source open to him. An appeal reached the latter for a loan of money and cutlery for "killing." Full of sympathy for "the unfortunate fellow," the landlord of the "King's Head" felt disposed to acquiesce in the request, and he, with his good wife, suggested that their sister-in-law should come and live with them until the trouble had subsided, and Blakesley had procured work. In pursuance of this plan, Mrs. Blakesley was duly installed in Eastcheap, where she received every kindness and encouragement.

It happened that Mr. Burdon had business of his own, entirely foreign to Blakesley's concerns, which necessitated a visit to Sevenoaks. Arriving there, he was very promptly informed of Blakesley's delinquencies, and he returned shocked and disgusted at many acts of paltry meanness and knavery which his brother-in-law had practised, doubly abhorrent to Burdon himself, who was well known for his probity and high sense of honour. His annoyance was so great, that he at once revoked his promise of assistance to Blakesley, concerning whom he had every reason to conclude that he was not a man to be trusted. Upon the next visit of the recalcitrant one to the "King's Head," he was uncompromisingly denounced and told that he would never be allowed to sleep in the house again. This dismissal at once so exasperated the man, that, from a calm and plausible being, he became transformed into a creature whose every expression of feature proclaimed him to be possessed of the instinct of the veriest brute in animated nature.

Baffled on all sides, and enraged at his ostracisation from his wife—under ordinary circumstances a justifiable sentiment—Blakesley betook himself to an insidious plan of revenge, and his actions at this time were utterly demoniacal in their nature. He lurked around the neighbourhood of the tavern, which he was finally expelled from, on any pretext. He fraternised with the police patrol and watchmen, and

HOW BLAKESLEY MURDERED MR. BURDON.

presented such a tale of injustice and arbitrariness that he succeeded in enlisting the sympathy of the myrmidons of the law. To one of the latter he represented that his wife was detained at the "King's Head," and he asked whether he could not demand to see her, and an officer remarked that he certainly thought he could, and he accompanied Blakesley to the tavern, where in an interview with Burdon the latter denied that Mrs. Blakesley was in the house. The pliant officer said that Blakesley intended to go before the Lord Mayor, and that he (the officer) would be a witness to Blakesley's demand to see his wife. But Burdon remained inflexible, and he absolutely negatived the object of the mission, going so far as to say that he knew nothing of Blakesley.

To another policeman the importunate fellow complained that he had been at the "King's Head" to demand audience of his wife, and that he had there been threatened with forcible ejectment. Passing a butcher's shop at the time, Blakesley observed, as he pointed to a knife on the block, "If I had had that, I think I should have used it." "Nonsense," was the reply, and Blakesley responded, "By God! I think

I should." The urbanity of this officer must have been extraordinary, for upon meeting our hero later on, he was invited to stand a half-pint of porter, with which request he appears to have complied, and this courtesy was extended—for what reason it did not transpire—to a prolonged discussion on various topics, which ended in Blakesley's remark that he was going to see his "old woman" by-and-by, and making an appointment for the next morning to "make the beer right." To a sympathetic and communicative barber in the neighbourhood the tale was told by Blakesley, who added that it was very hard his wife and "property" should be kept from him, and he said that he should apply for a warrant against Mr. Burdon. He also said that they were against him because he had been unfortunate in business at Sevenoaks, and that their conduct was enough to drive any man mad, predicting that if he had anything in his hand he would have shot Mr. Burdon when he refused to allow him to see his wife.

The inference is natural from the petty transaction over the modest measure of porter on the previous day, that Blakesley's finances had now drifted into exceedingly small dimensions, but his enforced economy suggests extreme finesse; for on the following day it seems that he was enabled to invest in a knife from a cutler, one Davis, in Aldgate High Street. Armed with this weapon, the desperado calculated his opportunities, and his purpose and intention was made clear in the fact that on the purchase of the knife he stipulated that the weapon should be sharpened, which was done. This negotiation having been concluded at about one o'clock on September 21, the murderer's movements in the interval up to the darkening shades of eventide are not recorded. Bankrupt, and probably by this time penniless, the choice of diversion was very limited to the conjugal martyr, and he must have contented himself with a very unsatisfactory feast of contemplation—the contemplation of an act of savage revenge, under circumstances of revolting cruelty and cowardice.

He had been seen lurking about the exterior of the tavern premises several times in the course of the day, but his apparent absence during a prolonged spell in the evening somewhat disarmed suspicion, and the exigencies of the moment necessitated the presence of Mrs. Blakesley in the bar of the "King's Head." Without a moment's warning, and when in the bustle of business the existence of the troublesome fellow was momentarily cast in oblivion, like a ferocious, bloodthirsty tiger, Blakesley sprang from ambush, and, dramatically screaming "My wife, or my life!" he plunged the knife deep into the unfortunate woman's left side. Now came the concentration of that pent-up passion which had been gyrating around the miscreant's heart. The sight of blood, as with the instinct of the irrational creatures of the earth, impelled the thirst for more and more. Sitting in the bar asleep, with covered face, was Mr. Burdon. With superhuman energy, and in a paroxysm of rage, Blakesley, with meteoric celerity, advanced, and in an instant his now gory instrument of death was driven deep into the abdomen of his surprised prey. An indescribable scene of carnage was the result. Maddened by the success of his butchery, Blakesley, to complete his fell work, made for Mrs. Burdon, but the intervention of her seriously-wounded sister arrested the progress of the deliberate thrust, and she survived to tell the ghastly tale.

A most sickening picture was presented. The blood of two people intermingled, and the intestines of the landlord protruded, so deep and gaping was the wound inflicted. Burdon paid the penalty of many an act of fraternal affection. The hand that had received the grip of hearty sympathy had in a moment reciprocated with Cain-like infidelity, and had sent the vital spark of a friend to that bourne from which the traveller returneth not.

As though dissatisfied with the extent of his barbarity, Blakesley turned round with the knife still in his hand. He walked half-way across the passage, and, throwing down the knife, he proceeded a short distance, and having again looked with fiendish contemplation on his maimed victims, he darted off and effected his escape from the house of public resort, through the length of the densely-populated area of Eastcheap, and for some days succeeded in eluding the most painstaking pursuit.

TO BE CONCLUDED.

A COUNTRY esquire asked a certain judge, when he was in the height of delivering his charge at the Castle of York, if he had seen the rhinoceros. Upon which the judge paused. The esquire went on, "Not seen the rhinoceros, my lord?" To which his lordship replied that "the etiquette was not yet settled between them, as they both had their trumpets, whether he should wait on the rhinoceros or the rhinoceros upon him."

Marriage a Profitable Business.

HOW THE FLEET PARSONS PLIED FOR TRADE, AND MARRIED FOOLS WHILE DRUNK.

AMONG the singular customs of our forefathers, arising in a great measure from their indifference to decorum, one of the most remarkable was matrimony, solemnised, we were going to say, but the fittest word would be "performed," by the parsons in the Fleet prison, to which reference has already frequently been made. These clerical functionaries were disreputable and dissolute men, mostly prisoners for debt, who, to the great injury of public morals, dared to insult the dignity of their holy profession by marrying in the precincts of the Fleet prison, at a minute's notice, any persons who might present themselves for that purpose. No questions were asked, no stipulations made, except as to the amount of the fee for the service, or the quantity of liquor to be drunk on the occasion. It not unfrequently happened, indeed, that the clergyman, the clerk, the bridegroom, and the bride, were drunk at the very time the ceremony was performed. These disgraceful members of the sacred calling had their "plyers," or "barkers," who, if they caught sight of a man and woman walking together along the streets of the neighbourhood, pestered them as the Jew clothesmen of a later day teased the passers-by in Holywell Street, with solicitations, not easily to be shaken off, as to whether they wanted a clergyman to marry them. Mr. Burn, in his curious work on the Fleet Registers, says he has in his possession an engraving (published about 1747) of "A Fleet Wedding between a brisk young Sailor and Landlady's daughter at Rederiff." "The print," he adds, "represents the old Fleet market and prison, with the sailor, landlady, and daughter, just stepping from a hackney-coach, while two Fleet parsons in canonicals are contending for the job. The following verses are in the margin:

"Scarce had the coach discharg'd its trusty fare,
But gaping crowds surround th' amorous pair;
The busy Plyers make a mighty stir,
And whisp'ring cry, D'ye want the Parson, Sir?
Pray step this way—just to the Pen in Hand,
The Doctor's ready there at your command:
This way (another cries), Sir, I declare,
The true and ancient Register is here:

"Th' alarmed Parsons quickly hear the din,
And haste with soothing words t' invite 'em in:
In this confusion jostled to and fro,
Th' inamour'd couple know not where to go,
Till, slow advancing from the coach's side,
Th' experienc'd matron came (an artful guide);
She led the way without regarding either,
And the first Parson splic'd 'em both together."

One of the most notorious of these scandalous officials was a man of the name of George Keith, a Scotch minister, who, being in desperate circumstances, set up a marriage-office in May-Fair, and subsequently in the Fleet, and carried on the same trade which was afterwards practised in front of the blacksmith's anvil at Gretna Green. This man's wedding-business was so extensive and so scandalous that the Bishop of London found it necessary to excommunicate him. It has been said of this person and "*his journeyman*," that one morning, during the Whitsun holidays, they united a greater number of couples than had been married at any ten churches within the bills of mortality. Keith lived till he was eighty-nine years of age, and died in 1735. The Rev. Dr. Gaynham, another infamous functionary, was familiarly called the Bishop of Hell.

"Many of the early Fleet weddings," observes Mr. Burn, "were really performed at the chapel of the Fleet; but as the practice extended it was found more convenient to have other places, within the Rules of the Fleet (added to which, the Warden was forbidden, by Act of Parliament, to suffer them), and, thereupon, many of the Fleet parsons and tavern-keepers in the neighbourhood fitted up a room in their respective lodgings or houses as a chapel! The parsons took the fees, allowing a portion to the plyers, etc.; and the tavern-keepers, besides sharing in the money paid, derived a profit from the sale of liquors which the wedding-party drank. In some instances, the tavern-keepers kept a parson on the establishment, at a weekly salary of twenty shillings! Most of the taverns near the Fleet kept their own registers, in which (as well as in their own books)

the parsons entered the weddings." Some of these scandalous members of the highest of all professions were in the habit of hanging signs out of their windows with the words "Weddings performed cheap here."

Keith, of whom we have already spoken, seems to have been a bare-faced profligate; but there is something exceedingly affecting in the stings of conscience and forlorn compunction of one Walter Wyatt, a Fleet parson, in one of whose pocket-books of 1716 are the following secret (as he intended them to be) outpourings of remorse:

"Give to every man his due, and learn ye way of Truth.

"This advice cannot be taken by those that are concerned in ye Fleet marriages; not so much as ye Priest can do ye thing that it is just and right there, unless he designs to starve. For by lying, bullying, and swearing, to extort money from the silly and unwary people, you advance your business and get ye pelf, which always wastes like snow in sunshiney day.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The marrying in the Fleet is the beginning of eternal woe.

"If a clerk or plyer tells a lye, you must vouch it to be as

THE RAKE'S WEDDING.

How Fleet Parsons Performed Their Functions.

true as ye Gospel, and if disputed, you must affirm with an oath to ye truth of a downright damnable falsehood.—Virtus laudatur et alget.

"May God forgive me what is past, and give me grace to forsake such a wicked place, where truth and virtue can't take place unless you are resolved to starve."

But this very man, whose sense of his own disgrace was so deep and apparently so contrite, was one of the most notorious, active, and money-making of all the Fleet parsons. His practice was chiefly in taverns, and he has been known to earn nearly sixty pounds in less than a month.

With such facilities for marriage, and such unprincipled ministers, it may easily be imagined that iniquitous schemes of all sorts were perpetrated under the name of Fleet weddings. The parsons were ready, for a bribe, to make false entries in their registers, to ante-date weddings, to give fictitious certificates, and to marry persons who would declare only the initials of their names. Thus, if a spinster or widow in debt desired to cheat her creditors by pretending to have been married before the debt was contracted, she had only to present herself at one of the marriage-houses in the Fleet, and, upon payment of a small additional fee to the clergyman, a man could instantly be found on the spot to act as bridegroom for a few shillings, and the worthless chaplain could find a blank place in his Register for any year desired, so that there was no difficulty in making the necessary record. They would also, for a consideration, obliterate any given entry. The sham bridegrooms, under different names, were married over and over again, with the full knowledge of the clerical practitioners. More than this, it sometimes happened that the "contracting parties" would send from houses of vile repute for a Fleet parson, who could readily be found to attend even in such places and under such circumstances, and there unite the couple in matrimony!

Of what were called the "Parish Weddings" it is impossible to speak in terms of sufficient reprobation. Many of the churchwardens and overseers of that day were in the frequent practice of "getting up" marriages in order to throw their paupers on neighbouring parishes. For example, in the "Daily Post" of July 4, 1741, is the following paragraph:

"On Saturday last the churchwardens for a certain parish in the city, in order to remove a load from their own shoulders, gave forty shillings, and paid the expense of a Fleet marriage, to a miserable blind youth, known by the name of Ambrose Tally, who plays on the violin in Moorfields, in order to make a settlement of the wife and future family in Shoreditch parish. To secure their point they sent a parish-officer to see the ceremony performed. One cannot but admire the ungenerous proceeding of this city parish, as well as their unjustifiable abetting and encouraging an irregularity so much and so justly complained of, as these Fleet matches. Invited and uninvited were a great number of poor wretches, in order to spend the bride's parish fortune."

In the "Grub Street Journal" for 1735 is the following letter, faithfully describing, says, Mr. Burn, the treachery and low habits of the Fleet parsons:

"Sir,—There is a very great evil in this town, and of dangerous consequence to our sex, that has never been suppressed, to the great prejudice and ruin of many hundreds of young people every year, which I beg some of your learned heads to consider of, and consult of proper ways and means to prevent for the future. I mean the ruinous marriages that are practised in the liberty of the Fleet and thereabouts, by a set of drunken, swearing parsons, with their myrmidons, that wear black coats, and pretend to be clerks and registers to the Fleet. These ministers of wickedness ply about Ludgate Hill, pulling and forcing people to some pedling ale-house or a brandy-shop to be married, even on a Sunday stopping them as they go to church, and almost tearing their clothes off their backs. To confirm

the truth of these facts I will give you a case or two which lately happened.

"Since Midsummer last a young lady of birth and fortune was deluded and forced from her friends, and, by the assistance of a wry-necked, swearing parson, married to an atheistical wretch, whose life is a continued practice of all manner of vice and debauchery. And since the ruin of my relation, another lady of my acquaintance had like to have been trepanned in the following manner. This lady had appointed to meet a gentlewoman at the Old Playhouse in Drury Lane, but extraordinary business prevented her coming. Being alone when the play was done, she bade a boy call a coach for the city. One dressed like a gentleman helps her into it, and jumps in after her. 'Madam,' says he, 'this coach was called for me, and since the weather is so bad, and there is no other, I beg leave to bear you company. I am going into the city, and will set you down wherever you please.' The lady begged to be excused; but he bade the coachman drive on. Being come to Ludgate Hill, he told her his sister, who waited his coming but five doors up the court, would go with her in two minutes. He went, and returned with his pretended sister, who asked her to step in one minute, and she would wait upon her in the coach. Deluded with the assurance of having his sister's company, the poor lady foolishly followed her into the house, when instantly the sister vanished, and a tawny fellow in a black coat and black wig appeared. 'Madam, you are come in good time; the Doctor was just a-going.'—'The Doctor!' says she, horribly frighted, fearing it was a madhouse: 'what has the Doctor to do with me?'—'To marry you to that gentleman. The Doctor has waited for you these three hours, and will be payed by you or that gentleman before you go!'—'That gentleman,' says she, recovering herself, 'is worthy a better fortune than mine,' and begged hard to be gone. But Doctor Wryneck swore she should be married, or if she would not, he would still have his fee, and register the marriage from that night. The lady, finding she could not escape without money or a pledge, told them she liked the gentleman so well, she would certainly meet him to-morrow night, and gave them a ring as a pledge, which, says she, 'was my mother's gift on her death-bed, enjoining that if ever I married it should be my wedding-ring.' By which cunning contrivance she was delivered from the black Doctor and his tawny crew. Some time after this I went with this lady and her brother in a coach to Ludgate Hill in the day-time, to see the manner of their picking up people to be married. As soon as our coach stopped near Fleet Bridge, up comes one of the myrmidons. 'Madam,' says he, 'you want a parson?'—'Who are you?' says I.—'I am the clerk and register of the Fleet.'—'Show me the chapel.' At which comes a second, desiring me to go along with him. Says he, 'That fellow will carry you to a pedling alehouse.' Says a third, 'Go with me; he will carry you to a brandy-shop.' In the interim comes the Doctor. 'Madam,' says he, 'I'll do your job for you presently!'—'Well, gentlemen,' says I, 'since you can't agree, and I can't be married quietly, I'll put it off till another time:' so drove away. Learned sirs, I wrote this in regard to the honour and safety of my own sex: and if for our sakes you will be so good as to publish it, correcting the errors of a woman's pen, you will oblige our whole sex, and none more than, sir,

"Your constant reader and admirer, "VIRTUOUS."

Such are but a few of the iniquities practised by the ministers of the Fleet. Similar transactions were carried on at the Chapel in May Fair, the Mint in the Borough, the Savoy, and other places about London; until the public scandal became so great, especially in consequence of the marriage at the Fleet of the Hon. Henry Fox with Georgiana Caroline, eldest daughter of the Duke of Richmond, that at length—not, however, without much and zealous opposition—a Marriage Bill was passed, enacting that any person solemnising matrimony in any other than a church or public chapel, without banns or licence, should, on conviction, be adjudged *guilty of felony*, and be transported for fourteen years, and that all such marriages *should be void*. This act was to take effect from the 25th of March, 1754.

Upon the passing of this law, Keith, the parson who has already been alluded to, published a pamphlet entitled, "Observations on the Act for Preventing Clandestine Marriages." To this he prefixed his portrait. The following passages are highly characteristic of the man:—

"'Happy is the wooing that is not long a-doing,' is an old proverb, and a very true one; but we shall have no occasion for it after the 25th day of March next, when we are commanded to read it backwards, and from that period (fatal indeed to Old England!) we must date the declension of the numbers of the inhabitants of England."—"As I have married many thousands, and consequently have on those occasions seen the humour of the lower class of people, I have often asked the married pair how long they had been acquainted; they would reply, some more, some less, but the generality did not exceed the acquaintance of a week, some only of a day, half a day," etc.—"Another inconveniency which will arise from this act will be, that the expense of being married will be so great, that few of the lower class of people can afford; for I have often heard a Fleet parson say, that many have come to be married when they have but had half-a-crown in their pockets, and sixpence to buy a pot of beer, and for which they have pawned some of their clothes."—"I remember once on a time, I was at a public-house at Radcliff, which then was full of sailors and their girls; there was fiddling, piping, jigging, and eating: at length, one of the tars starts up, and says, 'D—n ye, Jack, I'll be married just now; I will have my partner, and . . . . . .' The joke took, and in less than two hours ten couple set out for the Fleet. I staid their return. They returned in coaches, five women in each coach, the tars, some running before, others riding on the coach-box, and others behind. The cavalcade being over, the couples went up into an upper room, where they concluded the evening with great jollity. The next time I went that way I called on my landlord and asked him concerning this marriage adventure. He at first stared at me, but recollecting, he said those things were so frequent that he hardly took any notice of them; for, added he, it is a common thing when a fleet comes in, to have two or three hundred marriages in a week's time, among the sailors." He humorously concludes, "If the present Act in the form it now stands should (which I am sure is impossible) be of service to my country, I shall then have the satisfaction of having been the occasion of it, because the compilers thereof have done it with a pure design of suppressing my *Chapel*, which makes me the most celebrated man in this kingdom, though not the greatest."

The passing of the Marriage Act put a stop to the marriages at May Fair; but the day before the Act came into operation (Lady-day, 1754) sixty-one couples were married there.

It would exceed the limits of this brief sketch were we to give the *official* history of the different scandalous ministers who thus disgraced themselves, and impiously trifled with one of our most sacred institutions. That some of these wretched adventurers were merely pretended clergymen is certain; but it cannot be denied that many of them were actually in holy orders.

Of this latter class were Grierson and Wilkinson, the subjects of our present notice; and notwithstanding the heavy penalties imposed by the statute, they were not to be deterred from continuing the dangerous and unlawful traffic in which they had been engaged. Wilkinson, who was the brother of a celebrated comedian of the day, it would appear, was the owner of a chapel in the Savoy, and Grierson was his assistant; and their proceedings having at length become too notorious to be passed over, proceedings were instituted against them. Grierson was first apprehended, and his employer sought safety in flight; but supposing that he could not be deemed guilty of any offence, as he had not actually performed the marriage ceremony, a duty which he left to his journeyman, he returned to his former haunts. It was not long before he was secured, however, and having been convicted with Grierson, they were shipped off as convicts together to the colonies, in the year 1757.

AT the Old Bailey, January 13, 1721, two highwaymen, who were taken at the Black Horse in the Broadway, Westminster, were brought up from Newgate, and arraigned; but, refusing to plead to their indictments, the court, according to the law made in that case, ordered them to be pressed. One soon altered his mind, but the other obstinately refused, and for some time endured the torture; but, after about four hundredweight were gradually laid upon his naked breast, he being in the meantime extended and chained to the ground, he also altered his resolution, and said he would plead; which he did, viz., that he was not guilty.

A COUNTRY gentleman who had just buried a rich relation, who was an attorney, was complaining to the great Foote of the very great expenses of a country funeral. "Why," said Foote gravely, "do you bury your attorneys here?" "Yes, to be sure we do. Why?" "Oh, we never do that in London." "No?" said the other, much surprised. "What do you do, then?" "Why, when the patient happens to die, we lay him out over night in a room by himself, lock up the door, throwing up the sash, and in the morning he is entirely off." "Indeed," was the amazed reply, "what then becomes of him?" "Why, we cannot tell, not being acquainted with supernatural causes. All that we know of the matter is, there is a strong smell of brimstone in the room next morning."

AT Munich, there are two prisons for criminals. One in the Town house, has a dark, damp dungeon, down seventeen steps, where the instruments of torture are deposited. The other consists of about fifteen cells, twelve feet by seven, and a black torture room. Here is a table covered also with black cloth and fringe; six chairs for the magistrates and secretaries, covered also with black cloth, are elevated above the floor, and painted black. Various engines of torture, some of which are stained with blood, hang around the room. When the criminals suffer, the candles are lighted, for the windows are shut close to prevent their cries from being heard abroad. Two crucifixes are presented to the view of the unhappy objects. "But," says Mr. Howard, "it is too shocking to relate their different modes of cruelty; even women are not spared."

"And taste
The melancholy joys of evils
pass'd;
For he who much has suffer'd,
much will know"
—HOMER, "Odyssey."

The Story of Madame Lafarge.

How a Beautiful French Lady was charged with poisoning her Husband . . . After twelve weary years in prison, her innocence was proved; but her release was quickly followed by her death

PART I.

THOSE who have studied poisons with attention will admit that to-day it is almost impossible for an innocent person to be found guilty on scientific evidence alone, and at the same time will declare that it is equally impossible for the guilty to escape detection. The murderer always looks to the unexpected happening, and trusts that his own cunning will enable him to defeat the ends of justice, forgetting that the criminal invariably betrays himself in the long run.

The case which we are going to consider is an example of how, in the early half of the last century, insufficient knowledge caused a grave injustice to be done to an innocent woman.

About the commencement of 1820 a little daughter was born to Captain Capelle, an officer in the French Imperial Artillery. When the infant was a few months old the mother died. For six years the father watched over his child, and then joined his wife beyond the tomb, leaving his daughter to the care of her aunt. Marie Fortunée, for such was the girl's name, was a bright little mite, and a general favourite. The aunt, however, was not fond of children, and eagerly looked forward to the time when a husband should relieve her of the charge which she had unwillingly to look after. Day by day, as she saw her young niece growing up, the old lady would plan how to get her off her hands at the first moment possible. Still time went on, and, through fear of her aunt, suitors did not come for Marie Fortunée. The girl was now nearly nineteen—high time, as Madame put it, for her to be married, and have her own house. To further this most desirable consummation, a notice was sent to a matrimonial agent in Paris, named M. Defoy, and a loveless alliance arranged between the young and beautiful Marie and an ironmaster of Glandier, by name Lafarge.

Marie was possessed of considerable fortune, for the artilleryman had left her a lump sum of 40,000 francs and a further yearly income of 4,000 francs. This was sufficient attraction to M. Lafarge, but as marriages must appear to the eyes of the world to be equal, he represented himself as a man of wealth. The contracts duly signed, Marie wrote to a friend of hers, informing her of the projected marriage, and thus described her fiancé:

"Here are the details which I can give you: M. Lafarge is twenty-eight years old; of sufficiently ugly face and very awkward appearance and manners. But he has good teeth, an air of good-nature, and an excellent reputation. His property is in Limousin, at 130 leagues from Paris. He has a good fortune, and a handsome château, as far as I can judge from the plans which he has given me. He comes to Paris every year on his business. Besides, he adores me, which is very agreeable to me. He likes horses."

This letter appears contradictory; but it must be remembered that Marie was a young and perfectly innocent girl, and readily believed the protestations of her suitor, who was certainly much older than he represented himself to be, and was not possessed of the fortune which he declared he had inherited.

Marie's aunt was loth to let the grass grow under her feet, and was anxious to get her niece married at once, a desire which the ironmaster shared. So in a few days the ceremony took place in one of the churches of Paris, and the bridal couple left for Glandier to spend the honeymoon in the house of the bridegroom.

In France there is not the same consideration shown for young married couples that there is in Great Britain, and consequently Marie was not surprised to learn on the journey that her husband's mother and sister shared the Glandier ménage, and that his chief clerk, a rascal named Denis Barbier, was virtually an occupant of the house, though he did not sleep there.

Old Madame Lafarge received her new daughter-in-law with every protestation of friendship, but it did not require much acumen to see that she bitterly resented the arrival of the nominal mistress of the house.

After being introduced to her marriage relations, Marie rushed up to her bedroom, pleading a headache as an excuse, locked herself in, and there wrote the following remarkable letter to her husband:

"CHARLES,—I have to entreat your pardon on my knees! I have unworthily deceived you. I love you not—I love another. My God! What I have suffered! You, whom I esteem with all my soul, oh, suffer me to die. Say to me only—'Die, and I will pardon you!' and to-morrow I will be no longer in existence. My head is bursting; will you come to my relief? Hear me, in pity hear me! He is also named Charles. He is handsome and noble; he was brought up with me, and we have loved each other ever since we knew what love was. A year ago another woman stole his heart from me. I thought I should have died. In my spite I resolved to marry. Alas! I saw you. I was ignorant of the mysteries of marriage. I trembled with joy at the pressure of your hand. Unhappy woman! I thought a kiss on the forehead was all that was due to you, and that you would be to me as a father. Cannot you conceive what I felt during those three days? Conceive that if you do not spare me I shall die. I will confess all to you. I esteem you with all my soul—I venerate you; but habits and education have placed an insuperable barrier between us. Instead of soft words of love and sweet acts of kindness, there are nothing but the senses that speak in you, and those are revolting in me. And then he is repentant. I saw him at Orleans while you were at dinner. He was in a balcony

opposite mine; he is even here, for he is concealed at Uzerches. I shall become an adulteress in spite of myself—in spite of you—if you do not save me. Charles, do you, whom I offend so dreadfully, tear me both from yourself and from him? Tell me this evening that you will consent; have a pair of horses ready; tell them to drive to Brives; there I will take the Bordeaux mail, and thence embark for Smyrna. I will leave you all my fortune. God will make it prosper in your hands, for you deserve it. I will live by the labour of my hands, or by giving lessons. I entreat you never to suffer it to be

suspected that I am still living. If you wish it, I will throw my cloak on the top of one of your precipices, and all will be over. If you desire it I will take arsenic, for I have some. All will soon be over. You have been so good to me, that in refusing you my affections I can give you my life, but as to receiving your caresses—never! In the name of the honour of your mother do not refuse me! In the name of God pardon me! I am waiting your answer like a criminal expecting his death-warrant. Alas! did I not love him more than life, I could have loved you, through the esteem I have for you, but your caresses now are disgusting to me. Kill me, for I deserve it, and yet my hope rests upon you. Put an answer under my door this evening; if you do not, to-morrow I shall be dead. Do not take any trouble about me. I will go on foot to Brives, if necessary. To remain here for ever! Your mother so tender—your sister so kind—all this oppresses me and makes me hold myself in horror. Oh, be generous! Save me from self-destruction. In whom can I confide if not in you? Address myself to him! Never. I will not be either yours or his. I am dead to all the affections. Be a man. You cannot yet love me—pardon me. Horses would lead to the discovery of our route; get for me two soiled dresses of the country-people. Pardon me, and may God give you a recompense for the evil I do to you. I will take with me only a few jewels, given to me by my friends as keepsakes. Of the rest, you will send to me at Smyrna whatever you may deign to permit me to receive from your hands, for all is yours. Do not accuse me of deception. From Monday last—from the hour that I knew that I was to be to you something more than a sister—that my aunt told me what it was to give oneself to a man—I swore I would die. I took a too small dose of poison, and again at Orleans. I vomited yesterday. The loaded pistol was at my temple during the shocks, but I was afraid. Now all depends upon you, and I will not shrink again. Save me! Be the guardian angel of a poor orphan, or else kill her, or desire her to kill herself. Write to me, because without your word of honour in writing—and I can confide in you—I will not open my door.

"MARIE."

THE ARREST OF MADAME LAFARGE.

Naturally, M. Lafarge was dumbfounded. Was he to remain a stranger to his wife? Were all the hopes which he had entertained of a happy union to be shattered? In his predicament, he had recourse to a M. Chauvron, an old crony of his, who recommended him to try by kindness to overcome the repugnance of Marie, and, at the same time, urged on him the necessity of watching for any indications of the mysterious lover, of whose presence no one had previously been aware. So he went back to his home, and gave his consort the required promise that he would treat her as a sister till she saw fit to permit him to treat her as a wife.

At first this had no effect, and his great solicitude for his bride was rewarded by another letter, in which Madame Lafarge declared:

"I must fly from you, for if I do not I shall become a criminal. I shall have recourse to poison, and destroy myself."

Still the ironmaster persevered, and eventually managed to change his wife's aversion into affection. Marie followed him about like a pet cat, and did everything in her power to prove that she really loved her husband at last.

It was just at this time that Madame Lafarge became indisposed, and was nursed by her husband with the greatest possible tenderness. This so affected her that she sent for a lawyer and made a will, leaving all her possessions to M. Lafarge. Now, the solicitor was not as discreet as gentlemen of his cloth generally are, and divulged the terms of the will to the ironmaster, who, not to be outdone in generosity by his wife, also had his will drawn up, bequeathing all his worldly goods to his beloved Marie. Again the man of law was unfaithful, and communicated the contents of the document to Marie Lafarge.

All went well until December, when the Lafarges had been married for four months, for the wedding took place on the 15th of August; and then M. Lafarge had to go to Paris on business. He was a scientific iron-worker, and had made a discovery which he thought would be the means of more than doubling his income. This he wanted to patent, and then to raise sufficient money on a loan in order to exploit his invention. To do this effectively, he was compelled to go to the capital, and the patent was taken out on December 14, 1839.

Entering into her husband's affairs with keen interest, Marie wrote to several of her relations, and asked them to further M. Lafarge's project as much as they could. This they willingly did, and the necessary money was soon obtained.

While Charles Lafarge was away, Marie wrote to him continually, sending him affectionate letters, lamenting the enforced separation, and begging him not to lose a moment in returning. In spite of the mercenary commencement of his courtship, Lafarge seems to have been very fond of his young wife, for the few letters extant which he wrote to Marie, and which were answers to her loving communications to him while he was absent, breathe affection in every line; even when we have made due allowance for the more extravagant language adopted by our friends across the Channel. Here is an extract from one of them:

"It is ten o'clock, bonne petite Marie, and you know that it is the moment for us to think of nothing but the love we have for each other. I am sixteen leagues away from you, and the night will leave me in sadness, when, seeking by my side, my hand will not find the object of my dreams and thoughts. Yes, my angel, I repeat that it is a great sacrifice for me to be without you, and to think of you is my sweetest recreation. To think that I love and adore you renders my heart content, but you are not with me To say to myself, while I am writing to you, that you love me—that you are all my own—ah! Marie, how happy this idea renders me. Two hours hence you will appear to me in my sleep. How I shall embrace you, and press you in my arms!—Adieu, etc."

I think we must admit that the above is an admirable specimen of a letter from husband to wife. But Marie was not content with sending letters; she wished her presence to be continually with the husband who had made love to her after marriage, and to this end she gave a commission to an artist, named Brun, to paint her portrait, so that she could send it to Charles

At the same time her husband's mother, Madame Lafarge, senior, made some cakes, which she wanted to forward to her son, and hearing that Marie was about to send her picture to Charles, she asked her to make cakes and painting up into one parcel, so that the extra cost of carriage might be saved. To this the daughter-in-law agreed, and five small cakes were delivered to her. In the presence of her mother-in-law and her husband's sister, Héloise, Marie packed up the articles, and the parcel was then sealed in the presence of all three. It was then given to a carrier for transference to Paris, some sixteen leagues distant.

Denis Barbier thought that it might be worth his while to go to Paris and see what his master was doing, and this he did on the very day that Marie dispatched the parcel of cakes and the picture. Later events have proved that he was in the lodgings of his master when the parcel arrived, and that he was actually present some hour or so later when it was opened.

Travelling was not so rapid in the first half of the nineteenth century as it is to-day, and it was not till the 18th of December that the little love-offering reached M. Lafarge. When he saw it he opened it, and, after reading his wife's letter, he looked for the cakes which were mentioned in the note, and tasted them. During the night and the following day he was attacked by violent fits of vomiting and diarrhœa, accompanied by great pain in the stomach.

This alarmed him very much, and he wrote to tell his spouse of his condition. She was very much concerned, and, being as impressionable as most young French brides, remarked that she was sure he was going to die, and asked what were the customs to be observed by widows in that part of France. Denis Barbier returned with the letter, and it is almost a certainty that he was the first to tell Madame Lafarge that her husband might die. By the light of after events, this suggestion has a sinister meaning, which should not be overlooked.

Feeling miserable away from home, M. Lafarge returned to Glandier on the 5th of January, and at once went to bed. A physician was sent for, and he was nursed most tenderly by his wife. She rarely left his bedside, even taking her own meals there, and sometimes tempting him to partake of any dish which she was eating and which was particularly nice.

One day he was foolish enough to join her in some chicken with truffles—hardly the sort of meal which one would suggest for an invalid—and shortly afterwards the colic returned again with great violence. On a later day he had some "lait de poule," the French equivalent for chicken broth, prepared for him, and when it was brought to his bedside he noticed that it had a white powder floating on the surface which he did not like the look of. M. Lafarge was asleep when first the broth was brought up, and his wife ordered that it should be left till he awoke. In the meantime, Mlle. Brun thought that she saw Madame Lafarge putting some powder into it, and when she inquired what the substance was, was told it was nothing more harmful than some preserved orange flowers, pounded.

All the drinks for the sick man were prepared by his wife, and it has been stated that, on more than one occasion, she was seen putting powders into them; but she explained that gum arabic was all that she was adding, to thicken the draughts and to make them more soothing for the inflamed stomach. At the same time, it must not be forgotten that on January 5 and 10 she actually did purchase large quantities of arsenic from a local druggist.

M. Lafarge gave orders that the chicken broth should be sent to M. Eyssartier for examination; for that gentleman was a friend of his and a passable chemist. He sent back word that he would not be prepared to say whether arsenic was in the soup or not without proper analysis; but he suggested that the food for the sick man should only be handled by persons in whom he could have complete reliance.

This answer, as may be imagined, frightened the members of the household, and they at once administered antidotes to the poison, but without avail. On the following day M. Lafarge expired in great agony.

The presumption of her guilt was great, and Madame Lafarge was arrested by the Gendarmerie, and ordered to stand her trial for murder.

TO BE CONTINUED.

A Famous Forgery . . .

HOW A GANG OF ASTUTE RASCALS VICTIMISED FOREIGN BANKS.

A GIGANTIC and most unprecedented fraudulent conspiracy was made public by the details of the case "Bogle v. Lawson," tried at the Surrey Assizes, at Croydon, on August 16, 1841. This was an action brought by the plaintiff, Bogle, against the "Times" newspaper for libel. The libel complained of was contained in a letter addressed to the famous newspaper by one of its correspondents in May, 1840, and published in that journal.

This communication categorically asserted "that a great forgery company, established on the Continent, had been lately detected and blown up, and that the object of the company was to plunder the Continental bankers by the means of forged letters of credit, purporting to be of the banking firm of Glynn, Halifax, Mills, and Co., of London." The letter then went on to give the names of the conspirators, and, among others, included the name of the plaintiff Bogle. Hence the action.

Before entering into the details of the case, it here becomes necessary to lay before the reader the general scope of this most gigantic fraudulent conspiracy, which, for its diabolic ingenuity, has barely been equalled, and certainly not surpassed by any organised swindle ever known.

The object set before them by the astute gang, of which the "Times" correspondent had asserted that Allen Bogle was a member, was to acquire enormous pillage from Continental banking houses by adroit forgeries of what are termed lettres circulaires (circular letters), or letters of credit, a most useful commercial device to obviate the necessity for Continental travellers carrying large amounts of specie with them.

Such letters are obtained from bankers of good standing either for a sum absolute, as, for example, £500, drawn upon stamped paper, in any given amount a payee requires, or a particular credit of £2,000 or £5,000 is demanded, for which the traveller or payee gives value or security (say) in London, and for which he draws in such amounts from abroad and at such places as his necessities require. Tens of thousands of these circular letters are issued yearly by the different bankers, both in the City and the West-end, for sums varying from £100 to £10,000. They are all, as to the wording, very similar in substance, though they differ occasionally, not only in collocations of phrase, but in modes of expression. They are all, moreover, engraved in blank, leaving spaces for the number of the letter, for the name of the bearer of it or payee, and for the signature of the bankers.

This premised, let us briefly glance at the condition in life and antecedents of the various members of a nefarious gang of which the "Times" correspondent had asserted that Allen Bogle formed a unit. These were very varied, both in nationality and station, but most were men of considerable astuteness and undoubted intellectual power.

First, in respect of nominal rank, came the Marquess de Bourbel, who had held some small diplomatic or official position, and was a man of very considerable accomplishments, but was a gambler and roué, had killed his man in a duel, and was held by those who knew him best to be a mauvais sujet, or, as we say in English, "a bad lot."

One of De Bourbel's chums was a remarkable Briton—a certain Cunningham Graham, formerly of Gartmore, in Scotland, but at the time of which we are treating an exile from his home and country, from which he had fled in order to escape his creditors. Graham was a man of great accomplishments, but withal cool, crafty, designing, and thoroughly unprincipled. He had a refined taste in the fine arts, but it was in the imitative and mechanical crafts that he pre-eminently excelled. An excellent mechanician, he had fabricated a most ingenious apparatus which would trace and reproduce lines of all kinds with faultless accuracy and delicacy. Probably the machine was of somewhat the nature of an extremely perfect "pantagraph." It is, at any rate, asserted that by it Graham was enabled to produce perfect copies of the rarest engravings of Rafaelle, Domenichino, and Guido. If, in the exercise of his ingenuity, this had been the extent of Graham's achievements it would have been well for him; but it will be apparent from the sequel that this machine of Graham's contrivance was not only formed to trace engravings and works of art, but the autographs of bankers and other signatures.

It appears that Graham arrived in Florence in 1832 or 1833, and De Bourbel reached the same Italian city in 1833 or 1834. When or how the two became acquainted is not known, but it is presumed that it was not very long after De Bourbel's arrival in Florence.

The twain had not been long together in Florence when Graham was joined by his step-son, Allen George Bogle, the plaintiff in the action with which we have here to do. This step-son of Graham's had been in the Royal Navy, and filled

other good positions, and was at that period in the bank of Messrs. Kerrick and McCarthy.

Up to the month of November, 1837, there was no imputation on the character of Mr. Bogle. He lived quietly and respectably at Florence, and although it was known that his step-father was a person who had left Scotland under discreditable circumstances and that the son of the latter, Alexander Graham (who afterwards played a part in the conspiracy) was a debauched and dissolute young man, yet there was no imputation—at least, none such was publicly known—against the fair fame and repute of Allen George Bogle.

In March, 1839, it is more than probable, however, that Mr. Bogle was in possession of the plot, as it was then resolved on, and which was executed little better than a twelvemonth afterwards.

Early in that month, De Bourbel was first introduced to the house of Bogle, Kerrick, and Co., by Bogle himself. The foundation members of the conspiracy being now ready to commence operations, took action in discovering certain suitable subordinates for carrying out their plans. These consisted of Baron d'Arjazon (an old friend of Bourbel), Marie Rosalie Desjardine, the baron's mistress, a certain Frederick Pipe, and Charlotte (his wife), Alexander Graham (Cunningham Graham's son), Charles Gerard de Paindry (a self-styled count), and Thomas William Perry, alias "Ireland."

Operations were commenced by the conspirators getting hold of a genuine letter of credit, issued in favour of a gentleman named Robert Nicholson, and a supply of the special paper on which Messrs. Glyn, Halifax, Mills and Co. had their documents printed. An engraver was employed to make the copper-plates in imitation of the genuine letter; the seal was engraved, and copies were struck off at De Bourbel's lodgings in the Quadrant. It was here that the marvellous mechanical talents of Graham proved invaluable to the fabrication of the fraudulent cheque. The engravers whom they employed were sufficiently skilful to execute and copy the conventional script, etc., in which the bills were engraved. But it needed something more than their deft handicraft to render the letters negotiable instruments. This was effected by Graham's clever machine, which could easily produce a veritable fac-simile of the bankers' signature, so perfect as to be undetectable even by the bankers or the bank's cashier themselves.

Having his gang of conspirators perfectly organised, and being able to command a supply of most perfect imitations of genuine circular letters, De Bourbel was ready to commence active preparations. But for what purpose were the ramifications which demanded so large a gang—called for the combination of so many confederates? A little consideration will show that in a conspiracy against the commercial world so gigantic and so unscrupulous as this, suddenness and celerity were absolutely indispensable for success. The coup, indeed, must be instantaneous and simultaneous. If De Bourbel solus (or even with Graham's and Bogle's assistance) had begun to operate with their counterfeit letters, they could only have began at one place each, and doubtless detection would have followed before their plunder would have been very great. But this would by no means have suited their views. It is clear that their ambition was of gigantic calibre, and hence the ramifications of the conspiracy. Had the plotters succeeded they would doubtless have netted a million sterling, and stakes so enormous demanded, and were worth, careful organisation.

All being in a state of readiness on April 1 (ill-omened date), the whole of the conspirators (with the exception of De Bourbel and Frederick Pipe, alias Dr. Coulson) made their way to Aix-la-Chapelle, where Alexander Graham was in waiting for them, under the assumed name of Robert Nicholson. Here they remained till April 19, a day or two before the operations were arranged to commence simultaneously in Belgium, on the Rhine, and in Italy.

It was, it appears, no part of the original compact that the three principal conspirators should themselves present the forged letters. The chief conspirators limited their operations to the finding of fitting instruments. Bourbel, having accordingly placed the subordinate actors under the command of D'Arjazon (alias De Castel), proceeded with Pipe (alias Dr. Coulson) to Paris, on their way to Italy, in order to be there in time for the commencement of simultaneous operations in that country on the 21st—the day agreed on. At Nice they met old Graham by appointment, who, it appears, from the intercepted letters seized by a juge d'instruction in France, "declared the letters to be perfection, and that it would be impossible to refute them." It was at Nice, too, that, on the 14th, Bourbel, after an interview with old Graham, wrote to Graham the younger to "be of good courage, to act vigorously; that all is right, and a proof that all is right is, Mr. Bogle lets him come and embark in the affair. Bogle and your papa are convinced that all will turn out well, and that the letter of credit must be paid." On the 21st De Bourbel presented himself at the banking-house of Bogle, Kerrick, and Co., and was absolutely closeted with Bogle in a private room, to which strangers and the public had no ingress, for upwards of two hours. Shortly after De Bourbel's departure De Paindry presented his letter of credit and received on it £200.

The plot was now in process of execution in other parts of Europe by the subordinates. At Genoa, Frederick Pipe, as Dr. Coulson, presented to Gibbs and Co. one of the letters of credit for £2,000, requesting to be paid £1,500 in gold for the purpose, as he stated, of purchasing works of art. Gibbs paid the money and Coulson signed the usual bills on Glyn and Co. for the amount. Graham, the elder, accompanied Coulson, and a Perry ("Ireland") was in like manner in his operations accompanied by D'Arjazon, it is presumed these individuals took charge of the money. On the following day Coulson presented another letter of credit to Nigra and Son, at Turin, and obtained thereon £600 sterling.

On the 23rd Coulson and Graham were at Milan, where the former obtained from Pasteur, Girod, and Co. £800 on another letter of credit. On the 24th £800 was obtained from Louis Laurent and Co. From Parma Coulson and Graham went by steamer to Rome, necessarily, taking Leghorn on their way.

At the Villa Micati they had an interview with De Bourbel with a view to report progress. It is also certain that they transferred to him his share of the booty, for on the 28th of April it appears from the police books that De Bourbel came to Florence, and Freppa, his banker, admits that on the day he received from him 1,700 napoleons in gold.

These parties next proceeded to Rome.

We find that in the "Eternal City," on the 28th of April, Coulson presented himself to M. le Mesurier, and, having asked for £200, was paid it. He returned and requested £1,300 more, which caused M. le Mesurier to hesitate, as this was the first time he had honoured any letter of Glyn and Co. Coulson became enraged at the hesitation, saying his father had sent him out to execute a commission he had received to purchase pictures, and that if the money was not paid, he should repay the £200, return to England, and his father should bring an action against Glyn and Co. for the expense of the journey, as well as being disabled by the action of their own agent from fulfilling his engagement.

On a full consideration of the circumstances, and after consulting the English consul and another gentleman, Le Mesurier and Co. paid the money.

On the day following the execution of the plot at Florence, on Mr. Kerrick's arrival at the bank, at a quarter past ten in the morning, he found the count in earnest conversation with Messrs. McCarthy and Bogle. The count had come to return the gold. After leaving the bank the day before he had gone to a shopkeeper named Philipson to take up more money on the letter, and, having left it in the possession of this person, he returned it to De Paindry in the evening, expressing some doubts as to its genuineness. "At first," said the much-injured count, "I determined to pass this over, but, on reflection, it is a matter which touches my honour; and, rather than have my name brought into question, I have resolved to return your money and request that you will write your correspondent and reassure yourselves as to the matter."

The indignant persistency of the count, his defiant tone and manner, the air of ingenuousness and truth which he assumed, wrought upon Messrs. Kerrick and McCarthy, the bills which the count had given on Glyn and Co. were destroyed, and the entry on the circular letter was underwritten on the next line, "The above payment cancelled by desire of of the bearer.—Bogle, Kerrick, and Co."

By this stroke of policy De Paindry gave additional colour to the genuineness of his letters of credit. It may be remarked that it is odd that one of the conspirators chose the house of a fellow-conspirator to be victimised with the general run of bankers. The answer is plain. The gains of Bogle on the robberies, amounting, according to the depositions of "Ireland," to 20 per cent., would be 50 per cent. greater than his individual proportion of the loss of the £200. The circumstance, too, of his house being a sufferer may have been designed to stifle all suspicion of collusion on the part of Bogle, who would naturally feel that if the participation of his step-father in the fraud should be discovered, suspicion necessarily would fall upon him.

We now return to De Paindry. After enacting the solemn farce of Wednesday, the 22nd of April, and putting his tongue in his cheek at the credulity of mankind, he proceeded on his way to Bologna and Venice. On the 23rd he presented his letter of credit to Landi and Roucadelli, obtaining £347, and on the 25th £40 from the brothers Dubois, of Venice. At Venice this accomplished sharper took the steamer for Trieste, where, on the 29th, he received £1,612 6s. from Messrs. Richard Routh.

Mr. Routh was so struck with his pleasing manner that he invited him to his opera-box in this evening, and De Paindry afterwards supped at his house.

To return to the conspirators on the Rhine. After leaving Aix-le-Chapelle, the Countess Vandec proceeded to Cologne, where she presented, on April 22, a letter of credit for £800 to S. Oppenheim, jun., and Co., on which she received £500. No surprise was excited, as she travelled in her private carriage with a courier. After leaving Cologne she proceeded to Coblentz, and on April 23 presented a fresh letter of credit to Messrs. Deinhard and Jordan, on which she requested, and was paid, £500, after every possible inquiry had been made. On the 24th Madame Vandec presented herself to Gogel, Koch, and Co., with a letter of credit for £800, and obtained thereon £520.

At Mentz she obtained a further sum of £500 from Haman and Mappes Fils on another letter of credit, and, after these dexterous feats, she proceeded to Paris. On April 20 (on which day the forged letters of credit had arrived from Nice, for De Bourbel, with Graham and Coulson, was there on the 14th), D'Arjazon with "Ireland" left Aix-le-Chapelle, where they had resided from April 1, without doing any effective business, and proceeded to Liège. In the street inhabited by the bankers Nagelmachers and Cergentaine the baron handed to Perry a letter of credit for £800, which the latter presented to these bankers, and asked for £550, which was refused, because his passport was not regular. He, however, returned next day, and received £100, of which De Castel took £80, giving "Ireland" £20 for his trouble.

From thence they proceeded to Brussels on April 21 or 22, when they presented a fresh letter of credit for £1,400 to Engler and Co., and received thereon £750. Of this sum "Ireland" received £250, the Baron d'Arjazon taking the balance. Ghent was visited by the same parties on the 23rd, when Perry (still "Ireland") presented to De Menlemeester and Son the same letter of credit on which he had previously received £100 at Liège; but here he met with a refusal, the bankers stating that they had no letter of advice from Glyn and Co. Later on the same day—the 23rd—Perry proceeded to Antwerp, and presented to M. Agie the same letter of credit presented to Engler and Co., but M. Agie, thinking it extraordinary that a man of "Ireland's" appearance should require a further advance beyond the £750 which he had so recently obtained from Engler and Co. (the applicant being, as he admitted, about to embark for England), declined because of the want of advice.

The real motive of M. Agie, however, was that he suspected a fraud, and, communicating his suspicions to M. Engler, that gentleman sent instructions to have Perry arrested. He was, accordingly, arrested on Saturday morning, April 25, together with the woman Pipe, on board the Ostend steamer bound for London, and safely placed in the custody of the Belgian authorities. On the day previous to this arrest—viz., the 24th—Alexander Graham had obtained £150 from the bankers of Aix-le-Chapelle on another forged letter of credit.

These were the different robberies effected on the Continent, making a grand total of £10,700.

This extraordinary conspiracy having thus become known by the arrest of two of the subordinates, it was immediately noticed in one of the Brussels papers, and afterwards in "Galignani's," in Paris.

The news of the discovery of the plot spread from Brussels to Paris and from Paris to London with great rapidity, and in consequence the correspondent of the "Times" addressed to that journal the letter which was the cause of Mr. Bogle's action. After a very lengthy trial, in the course of which the facts which we have just narrated came out before Lord Chief Justice Sir Nicholas Tindal, and a special jury returned a verdict for the plaintiff, damages one farthing, virtually a verdict for the famous journal which had dared to expose this formidable confederacy.

Of the conspirators in this gigantic scheme of fraud, Bogle was baffled, disgraced, and ruined. De Bourbel retreated to Spain. De Paindry was overtaken in Moldavia, and compelled to disgorge some of his plunder. Alexander Gordon died in great misery and want in a maison de santé near Paris. Graham, the elder, D'Arjazon and his mistress, and Pipe do not appear to have suffered any molestation on account of their nefarious conduct.

In perusing the evidence taken two salient points stand out and command our astonishment: (1) How so large and able a gang was organised; and (2) how so many men of some amount of education and clearly exceptional brain-power could have addicted themselves to such nefarious, criminal, and dangerous courses in preference to earning a good livelihood honestly and respectably. Under the first head it may be said that who was the fons et origo, the "head and front" and absolute originator and starter of the villainy, was not cleared up. The Marquess de Bourbel appears to have been the nominal chief of the confederacy, and he—roué, gambler, swindler, and duellist-murderer—was surely son of Satan enough to excogitate the vilest and blackest of plots; but the marquess does not appear to have brought the brain-power which resulted in the partial success of the conspiracy. It was rather the mechanical ability of the Scotsman, Graham, which helped the thing on, and the position of Allen Bogle was a most important factor in the affair. This latter fact was fully shown at the trial, and although a special jury gave that unscrupulous individual nominal damages, the result of the trial was unquestionably a triumph for the Press, as represented by the "Times."

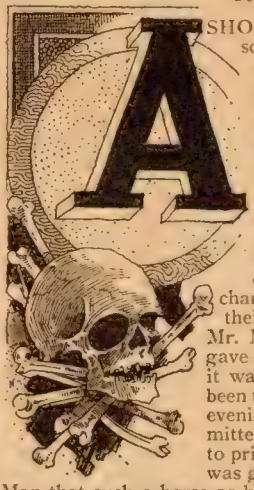
And the world realised and appreciated the services of "The Thunderer." A subscription was at once started, which resulted in the collection of the respectable sum of £2,700, which was proffered to the proprietors of the "Times" to defray the legal expenses they had incurred by the suit. Mr. Lawson, however, would not take the money, and eventually two record tablets were put up, one in the Royal Exchange and one in the "Times" office, and the balance was appropriated to founding two scholarships for boys of Christ's Hospital and the City of London School at Oxford or Cambridge.

Dick Turpin

"Villain, a horse. Villain, I say; give me a horse to fly!"
—GEORGE PEELE,
"Battle of Alcazar."

THE TRUE STORY OF THE INFAMOUS HIGHWAYMAN.

PART II.



A SHORT time after the events described in our first chapter, Turpin again dropped across King; but their meeting was unfortunate for the latter, for it ended in his death. Proceeding together towards London in the dusk of the evening, when they came near the Green Man on Epping Forest, they overtook a Mr. Major, who, being mounted on a very fine horse, while Turpin's beast was jaded, the latter obliged him to dismount, and exchange. The robbers now pursued their journey towards London; and Mr. Major, going to the Green Man, gave an account of the affair; on which it was conjectured that Turpin had been the robber. It was on a Saturday evening that this robbery was committed; but Mr. Major, being advised to print hand-bills immediately, notice was given to the landlord of the Green Man that such a horse as had been lost had been left at the Red Lion in Whitechapel. The landlord going thither, determined to wait till some person came for it; and at about eleven at night, King's brother came to pay for the horse, and take him away, on which he was immediately seized, and conducted into the house. Being asked what right he had to the horse, he said he had bought it; but the landlord, examining a whip which he had in his hand, found a button at the end of the handle broken off, and the name of Major on the remaining half. Upon this, he was given into the custody of a constable; but as it was not supposed that he was the actual robber, he was told that he should have his liberty if he would discover his employer. Hereupon he said that a stout man, in a white duffil coat, was waiting for the horse in Red Lion Street; and the company going thither, saw King, who drew a pistol, and attempted to fire it, but it flashed in the pan; he then endeavoured to pull out another pistol, but he could not, as it got entangled in his pocket. Turpin was at this time watching at a short distance off, and riding towards the spot, he saw his companion seized by some officers who had arrived. King immediately cried out, "Shoot him, or we are taken," on which Turpin fired, but his shot penetrated the breast of his companion. King called out, "Dick, you have killed me!" and Turpin then rode off at full speed.

King lived a week after this affair, and gave information that Turpin might be found at a house near Hackney Marsh; and, on inquiry, it was discovered that Turpin had been there on the night that he rode off, lamenting that he had killed King, who was his most faithful associate.

While on his flight from Hackney Marsh, the robber met a Captain and Mrs. Thompson who were riding in an open chaise. Being pushed for money, he attempted to refill his purse at the officer's expense, but the latter fired a carbine at him and drove him off. The shot missed, and Turpin returned the fire after the fast retreating vehicle. The bullet passed through the sleeve of the captain's coat, but did no other damage. Turpin chased his quarry till they drew near to a town, when he judged it prudent to draw rein and abandon the pursuit.

For a considerable time our "hero" skulked about the forest, having been deprived of his retreat in the cave since he

DICK TURPIN SHOOTS TOM KING.

shot the servant of Mr. Thompson; and a more active search for him having commenced, he determined to make good his retreat into Yorkshire, where he thought that he would be unknown, and might the more readily evade justice. The circumstance which induced him to take this step, appears to have been an attempt made by a gentleman's huntsman, to secure him by hunting him down with blood-hounds, whose mouths he escaped only by mounting an oak, when he had the satisfaction of seeing them pass by without noticing him.

Going first, therefore, to Long Sutton, in Lincolnshire, he stole some horses, for which he was taken into custody; but he escaped from the constable as he was conducting him before a magistrate, and hastened to Welton, in Yorkshire, where he went by the name of John Palmer, and assumed the character of a gentleman.

Soon after this he met a young woman sitting in the shade of a tree by the roadside, and got into conversation with her, asking why she was waiting. The damsel replied that she was only resting herself before going home, and the bold bandit proposed that she should ride in front of him on his horse. She demurred a little, so he got off, placed her on the saddle, and led the animal till the next inn was reached, where he borrowed a pillion, and thus took her home in comfort. Next day he called on the girl's father, a prosperous farmer, and purchased two cart horses from him on credit. One day sufficed for Turpin to sell the animals and decamp with the money. The result of this exploit was that a reward of two hundred pounds was offered for his capture. This troubled him very little, for he went about his ordinary pillaging business as calmly as ever, though his personality was well known to all between London and York.

Up to this point we have but recounted some of the more daring feats of the robber's career, feats which made for him his reputation, but there were countless little mean thefts which would damn him even in the eyes of a New York sneak thief. The very poor, the widow, and the orphan were not respected by him when he was really in want of money; all was fish that came into his net. Occasionally, however, his conscience did prick him, and he made amends—notably in the case of an elderly widow whom he robbed near Ferrybridge of all her little store of money which she was taking to her landlord. Being unable, therefore, to pay her rent, her small belongings were distrained on. The matter came to Turpin's ears, and one evening he threw a purse, containing more than the sum he had stolen, through the window of the widow's house.

He now frequently went into Lincolnshire, where he stole horses, which he brought into Yorkshire, and there he sold or exchanged them. From his being apparently a dealer in horses, he became acquainted with many of the surrounding gentry and farmers; and he frequently accompanied them on hunting and shooting expeditions. On one of these occasions he was returning home, when he wantonly shot a cock belonging to his landlord. Mr. Hall, a neighbour, who witnessed the act, said, "You have done wrong in shooting your landlord's cock," on which Turpin answered, that if he would stay while he loaded his gun he would shoot him too. Irritated by the insult, Mr. Hall communicated what had occurred to the owner of the cock, whereupon, complaint being made to the magistrates, a warrant was granted for the apprehension of the offender; and on his being taken into custody, he was examined before the magistrates at Beverley, and committed for want of sureties. Inquiries being made, the good opinions which had been formed of his mode of life were soon dissipated, and it was conjectured, that instead of being a horse-dealer, he was a horse-stealer. The magistrates, therefore, sent for him, and demanded to know what his business was, and he answered that about two years before he had carried on business at Long Sutton as a butcher, but that having contracted some debts for sheep that proved rotten, he had been compelled to abscond, and to go into Yorkshire to live. The clerk of the peace being commissioned to ascertain the truth of this story, learned that he had never been in business, and that he was suspected to be a horse-stealer, and had been in custody, but had escaped, and that there were many informations against him for various offences. He was then committed to York Castle, and soon afterwards some persons coming from Lincolnshire claimed a mare and a foal which were in his possession, and stated that they had been stolen recently before.

The real name and character of the prisoner were soon afterwards discovered by means of a letter which he wrote to his brother in Essex. The epistle was as follows:

"York, February 6, 1739.

"Dear Brother,—I am sorry to inform you that I am now under confinement in York Castle for horse-stealing. If I could procure an evidence from London to give me a char-

acter, that would go a great way towards my being acquitted. I had not been long in this county before my apprehension, so it would pass off the readier. For heaven's sake, dear brother, do not neglect me; you well know what I mean when I say I am yours,

"JOHN PALMER."

The letter was returned to the Post Office unopened, because the postage was not paid; and Mr. Smith, the schoolmaster, by whom Turpin had been taught to write, knowing the hand, carried the letter to a magistrate, by whom it was broken open, and it was thus discovered that the supposed John Palmer was Dick Turpin. Mr. Smith was in consequence despatched to Yorkshire, and he immediately selected his former pupil from the other prisoners, and subsequently gave evidence at the trial as to his identity.

On the rumour that the noted Turpin was a prisoner in York Castle, persons flocked from all parts of the country to take a view of him, and debates ran high whether he was the real person or not. Among others who visited him was a young fellow who pretended to know the famous Turpin; and, having regarded him a considerable time with looks of great attention, he told the keeper he would bet him half a guinea that he was not Turpin; on which the prisoner, whispering the keeper, said, "Lay him the wager, and I'll go you halves."

When this notorious malefactor was brought to trial, he was convicted on two indictments, and received sentence of death. After conviction he wrote to his father, imploring him to intercede with a gentleman and lady of rank that his sentence might be remitted, and that he might be transported; but although the father did what was in his power, the notoriety of his son's character was such that no persons would exert themselves in his favour.

The prisoner meanwhile lived in the most gay and thoughtless manner, regardless of all considerations of futurity, and affecting to make a jest of the dreadful fate that awaited him.

Not many days before his execution, he bought a new fustian frock and a pair of pumps, in order to wear them at the time of his death; and on the day before that appointed for the termination of his life, he hired five poor men, at five shillings each, to follow the cart as mourners. He gave hatbands and gloves to several persons, and left a ring and other articles of property to a married woman, with whom he had been acquainted in Lincolnshire.

On the morning of his death he was put into a cart, and, being followed by his mourners, he was drawn to the place of execution; on his way to which he bowed to the spectators with an air of the most astonishing indifference and intrepidity.

When he came to the fatal tree he ascended the ladder, and, on his right leg trembling, he stamped it down with an air of assumed courage, as if he was ashamed to be observed to show any signs of fear. Having conversed with the executioner about half-an-hour, he threw himself off the ladder, and expired in a few minutes. Turpin suffered at York, April 10, 1739.

The spectators of the execution seemed to be much affected at the fate of this man, who was distinguished by the comeliness of his appearance. The corpse was brought to the Blue Boar, in Castle Gate, York, where it remained till the next morning, when it was interred in the churchyard of St. George's parish, with an inscription on the coffin bearing the initials of his name, and his age. The grave was made remarkably deep, and the people who acted as mourners took such measures as they thought would secure the body; but about three o'clock on the following morning some persons were observed in the churchyard, who carried it off; and the populace, having an intimation whither it was conveyed, found it in a garden belonging to one of the surgeons of the city.

Hereupon they took the body, laid it on a board, and, having carried it through the streets in a kind of triumphal manner, and then filled the coffin with unslaked lime, buried it in the grave where it had been before deposited.

It is difficult to conceive the reason of all this concern and sympathy among the people; for a more depraved, heartless villain never suffered the penalty of the law. The fashion, however, which was then set appears to have continued in existence up to the present day; and fancy has done more to secure the reputation of Turpin as a hero, and a man of courage and generosity, than any pains he ever took to obtain for himself a good name as an honest man. It is needless to add that the story of the ride to York, and of the wondrous deeds of the highwayman's steed, "Black Bess," are, like many other tales of this fellow, the fabrications of some poetical brain.

Poisons;

THE MYSTERIOUS DRUGS which silently deal death, now popularly described for the first time . . .

ARSENIC, ITS EFFECTS AND ANTIDOTES.

THE FELON'S FAVOURITE SECRET POISON.

AS is generally known, no metallic poison has been made use of by criminals so much as arsenic. In the earliest days it was administered in the form of orpiment, or yellow sulphide, in which condition it is found in some parts of Greece and in Hungary. The orpiment first attracted attention by its brilliant colour, and it was mistaken for a compound of gold.

Pliny records that the Emperor Caligula, who was assassinated in 41 A.D., had a great quantity of orpiment brought from the Hungarian mines, and ordered the philosophers and doctors of his day to melt the mineral and manipulate it in various ways to extract the gold. Pliny does not doubt that the yellow material contained gold, but had to record the failure of the savants to obtain it from the material provided. This, however, did not discourage the early scientists, and, to the pursuit of the imaginary philosopher's stone, chemical science owes a good deal.

The white oxide of arsenic is prepared by slowly roasting the ore as it comes from the mines, and then putting the product into a closed vessel, joined to a receiver, and applying stronger heat. The mineral sublimes, that is to say, turns into vapour, which condenses in the receiver as a heavy white powder, or as crystallised masses. The vapour, which smells strongly of garlic, is very poisonous, and the greatest care has to be taken to prevent inhaling it.

The symptoms of arsenic poisoning vary a good deal, according to the form and the dose which is administered. In typical cases of poisoning by the white oxide, the patient experiences a feeling of sinking and depression, followed by sickness, and an intense burning pain in the stomach, which is increased by pressure. These symptoms are followed by purging, which is more or less violent, and often accompanied by cramp in the calves of the legs. Collapse rapidly comes on, and the patient dies from exhaustion. After death the lining membrane of the stomach is found to be very much inflamed, and, in many cases, badly ulcerated. Arsenic is, therefore, a distinct irritant poison.

Should a suspected case of arsenic poisoning occur, the best thing to do while waiting for the doctor is to administer a powerful emetic, preferably of warm mustard and water, and assist vomiting as much as possible by copious draughts of warm oil and water mixed. A medical man would use the stomach pump, and then administer a large quantity of dialysed iron, or fresh oxide of iron. The patient's life can be saved by prompt measures, but long-continued treatment for the violent inflammation of the stomach caused by the poison is usually necessary. Calcined magnesia, mixed with large draughts of milk, may also be administered as soon after the poison is recognised as possible, and may prevent a good deal of gastric inflammation.

There are several curious points about arsenic. It can be found in every part of the body of a man poisoned by arsenic, and even after the body has been buried for years it may be found in the bones. Again, arsenic may be administered in almost any form, but its post-mortem effects are the same. The poison can pass through the skin, and yet the stomach will be inflamed It can be inhaled as a vapour, and the same symptom will be found. It is one of the strongest of the irritant poisons.

But though arsenic has been known for so long, though more attention has been paid to its properties than to those of any other drug, it was not till 1836 that a chemical test for the poison was discovered. In olden times, if arsenic in its solid form was not found in the stomach, the old doctors decided that the poison had not been administered; hence the success of the Aqua Toffana, which was a solution of arsenic. Since 1836, however, when Marsh first discovered his test for arsenic, many more tests have been invented, and now it is the easiest of all poisons to recognise. Still, it remains the favourite drug with the suicide and the poisoner.

When administered internally, arsenic is usually a fairly rapid poison, but there have been cases innumerable where death has not taken place for many days. Take, for in-

stance, the case of Dr. Alexander, who took arsenic in the early fifties. He took a large dose, still he did not die for sixteen days; and, in 1847, a man was admitted into Guy's Hospital, who had swallowed 220 grains of the poison, and yet he survived for seven days. When administered through the skin, by external application, the poison takes some time to act, and in a recorded case, where a paste of arsenic was applied to the scalp, death did not ensue for twenty days.

To give a list of important cases of poisonings by means of arsenic would require a volume, so we shall content ourselves with mentioning merely the most sensational which have occurred in the last century. The palm must be given to the Maybrick case, where the lady obtained a good deal of the poison she made use of from a decoction of "fly-papers," which she averred she had purchased to make a cosmetic of. Fly-papers are made by soaking blotting-paper in a mixture of arsenite of soda and sugar, dissolved in water, and then drying the paper slowly. Each paper contains about the equivalent of two grains of white arsenic in a very easily extractable form, and one which is virtually tasteless. Thus it can be seen that fly-paper solution is really a strong poison, for though two grains of arsenic is the smallest fatal dose recorded, yet a solution of two fly-papers would certainly prove fatal. In the Maybrick case, arsenic was found in the stomach as well as abundant proof of the drug having been administered on several occasions. The lady, as our readers will remember, was sentenced to death, but eventually the sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life.

Some years prior to the Maybrick case the poisoning of Emile L'Angelier at Glasgow, by means of a large dose of white arsenic, attracted considerable attention, for a beautiful young lady named Madeleine Smith was accused of the murder, and after a protracted trial the jury declared that she had not been proved to have committed the crime, and brought in a Scotch verdict of "Not Proven." Still there is very little doubt that she did commit the crime, though actual proof was not forthcoming.

Fly papers were also used by Margaret Higgins to effect her foul purpose, and she expiated her crime on the scaffold. In 1840 all France was agitated by the charge of murder brought against Madame Lafarge, who was said to have poisoned her husband with arsenic. Evidence went to show that Lafarge fell ill after eating of a cake received from his home, and medical evidence was called to prove that arsenic was found in the body. Professor Orfila made the analysis of the body, and declared that in the whole body he had detected the one hundred-and-thirtieth part of a grain of arsenic. The cake was alleged to have been sent by Madame Lafarge, though it was subsequently shown that other people could have had access to it before Lafarge ate thereof. Nevertheless, on this flimsy evidence the woman was sentenced to be imprisoned for life.

Accidental poisoning by arsenic has frequently occurred. Who does not remember the trouble a year or two ago over arsenical beer, when it was shown that the arsenic got into the beer in the "inverted sugar," which was used to supply the place of a certain quantity of malt? Then in 1870 there was an outcry against green wall-papers, it having been shown that several families had been poisoned by the colouring matter contained in the papers, which in those days were dyed with "Scheele's Green," an impure and dangerous arsenite of copper, and in the same year occurred the case of the Queen v. Franklin and Randall, in which the accused were convicted of manslaughter, because they ignorantly used some Scheele's Green to colour a blanc-mange, which was served at a public dinner, believing that the green was only extract of spinach!

Then in the following year there was an outcry against confectioners in general, for it was found that they were using orpiment, or yellow arsenic, to colour sweets for children, and several mites died. And, lastly, there was a terrible case of accidental arsenic poisoning at Aachen, or Aix-la-Chapelle. Three workmen were engaged in separating silver from lead by means of an acid process, which liberates free hydrogen from zinc. The acid contained, unfortunately, a large quantity of arsenic as an impurity, and the arsenic combined with the hydrogen, forming an invisible poison. The three men ran away from the laboratory as soon as they smelt the poisonous gas; but they were too late, for all three died in a few hours in great agony.

Unfortunately, the law does not prevent the sale of the very dangerous poison for domestic purposes. Rat poison contains fifty per cent. of arsenic, mixed with meal and other matter which rats are fond of. This indiscriminate distribution of dangerous drugs is baneful to the Nation.

TO BE CONTINUED.

HOW DR. PRITCHARD POISONED HIS WIFE.

When accused, he tried to implicate his servant-girl, with whom he had formed a liaison.

Oh! think what anxious moments pass between
The birth of plots, and their last fatal periods,
Oh! 'tis a dreadful interval of time
Filled up with horror all, and big with death!
ADDISON—(*Cato*, Act I., Sc. 3).

PART II.

The Last Dread Walk from Cell to Scaffold.—How He Died.

WHEN the court opened on the following day it was crowded to the extreme. The interest which had been taken in the charge against Dr. Pritchard exceeded anything that had been shown in any case during the previous fifty years. When the Judge took his seat on the Bench there were next examined a couple of women who had been called in to assist in preparing Mrs. Taylor's body for burial, and one of them swore that Dr. Pritchard had told her that his mother-in-law had been drinking for several days, and had accidentally taken an overdose of opium, which had been one of the chief causes of her rapid death.

The two lodgers knew nothing about the case beyond that they had occasionally been attacked with sickness and cramp after meals in Dr. Pritchard's house, and under cross-examination admitted that Mrs. Pritchard had always been present at the common table when the meal had been followed by the unpleasant symptoms. These witnesses were followed by the medical men who had attended the dead ladies.

Dr. Cowan, the first of these, said that he had been called in by Dr. Pritchard on the 7th of February, and had found Mrs. Pritchard very weak. He had prescribed mustard poultices to the abdomen, and, in case of prostration, a little iced champagne. He believed that the prisoner and his wife lived on the most affectionate terms.

After him came Dr. Gairdner, who, curiously enough, was called in on the day following the last witness's visit. He found Mrs. Pritchard excited, but did not think that she was in any danger. He had an idea that she had been making too free a use of alcohol, and accordingly forbade any stimulants. The most remarkable symptom in her case was the spasmodic contraction of the hands, which the patient held above the head with the thumbs turned in, twitching nervously. On the following day he again saw her, and said that he thought she did not require any actual drug, but had better be fed on the very plainest food and not disturbed more than was absolutely necessary. He was puzzled by the case, and could not form any opinion about it at all.

Then came Dr. Paterson, who, it will be remembered, was called to see old Mrs. Taylor. It was on the night of the 24th of February that he was summoned for the first time in his life to Dr. Pritchard's house. He lived in the same street, and in case of emergency would be the first man to be called in. Dr. Pritchard told him that his mother-in-law, while in the act of writing, had fallen off her chair upon the floor and been taken upstairs to his wife's bedroom. The only cause to which he could attribute it was that both ladies had had some beer for supper, which disagreed with them, and he gave the witness to understand that Mrs. Taylor was in the habit of drinking spirits. They went together to the bedroom, and Dr. Paterson saw at a glance

that Mrs. Taylor was under the influence of some strong narcotic and was dying; the case was hopeless, and he said so at once to Dr. Pritchard. As he was leaving the house the latter said to him that Mrs. Taylor was in the habit of taking large doses of Batley's Sedative.

On the following morning a stranger, Mrs. Taylor's husband, called on him and told him that his patient was dead, and that Dr. Pritchard had sent him for the certificate of death. Witness refused, and said that he was surprised

Mr. Taylor called on Dr. Paterson.

that Pritchard, as a medical man, should suggest such an irregular proceeding. On the 3rd of March he received a schedule from the District Registrar to fill in; but he declined, and wrote to the official, giving his reasons for refusing, saying that inasmuch as he had only seen the deceased for a few minutes, while Dr. Pritchard had seen her from the commencement of her illness, he did not feel that he was the proper person to certify the cause of death. He ended his note with the words, "The illness was sudden, unexpected, and very mysterious."

While he was attending to Mrs. Taylor, he could not help being struck by the appearance of the prisoner's wife. She was pale and thin, and her features bore a bright, hectic flush, while her voice had the peculiar timbre only found in the case of persons collapsing from cholera or under the depressing influence of antimony. He felt sure that the latter was the true solution of the case.

On the 1st of March he met the prisoner in the street, and the latter asked him to have a look at his wife. He did so; and found that she was suffering from sickness, pains in the stomach, constant thirst, and so forth, and he prescribed a simple powder, containing mercury, in the form of grey powder. Eighteen days later he was again called in, and was surprised at the rapid change in his patient. She was in bed and conscious, but could hardly speak, as she was suffering from great thirst. Her eyes were fiery red, her cheeks hollow and flushed, her pulse weak and rapid, and she was clutching at the bed-clothes in the peculiar manner only seen in very alarming cases. He was much frightened at her condition, and as he was told that she had had no sleep for four days, he prescribed a sleeping draught. He had no chance of paying another visit, for Mrs. Pritchard died before the morning.

He was severely cross-examined, and his conduct in not making known his suspicions that antimony was being used as a poison in the house, when he attended Mrs. Taylor, strongly commented on. The Solicitor General said that Dr. Paterson's letter to the Registrar showed that he was aware that all was not as it should be, and he should have demanded a post mortem examination, when probably the poisoning of Mrs. Pritchard would have ceased.

Now as to proof that the prisoner possessed the poisons which he was alleged to have used. Chemists from various parts of Glasgow were called in evidence, and it was shown that Dr. Pritchard had made extensive purchases of antimony tartrate, buying the drug an ounce at a time. The ordinary dose of antimony tartrate is two grains, and an ounce would last a medical man in full practice for at least a year, yet Dr. Pritchard had purchased many pounds of the poison. Aconite had been purchased in the form of Fleming's solution, which is six times stronger than the ordinary tincture, and the amount which Pritchard had bought in six months would have lasted the Glasgow hospital for three years. After this evidence had been put in, the experts who had made the post mortem examination went into the box.

They said that together they had made the post mortems, and subsequently analysed portions of the bodies. In the case of Mrs. Pritchard, there was nothing in the state of the organs to account for death by natural means. In the liver and contents of the stomach alone antimony to the extent of ten grains was found. The whole body was impregnated with the poison, and there could be no doubt that such a large dose was not given at one time, for antimony tartrate is a strong emetic, and would be rejected almost at once. It would also leave a considerable amount of inflammation of the mucous membrane. In this case there was no inflammation, and the doctors were forced to conclude that the drug had been administered in very small doses extended over a long time.

In the case of old Mrs. Taylor, the surgeons said that there was nothing to support the statement that she had succumbed to apoplexy. All her organs were healthy, with the single exception of the heart, which was slightly enlarged, as is usual in persons of such an advanced age. From their analysis it was clear that she had been poisoned by the administration of antimony tartrate, which had been given in successive doses, but from the large quantity found in the stomach there could be no doubt that the last dose had been taken shortly before death.

The bottle of Batley's Sedative which had been found on the body was strongly impregnated with antimony and aconite, and the paper bag of tapioca from which the cook had prepared the tapioca pudding for Mrs. Pritchard, and of which both ladies had partaken, was found to contain a mixture of antimony and tapioca.

Dr. Maclagan said that the result of the examination entirely bore out the statement that the two women had been poisoned with antimony, and the symptoms as described in court were consistent with that form of poisoning. On being asked by the counsel for the defence if it was not possible that these symptoms might be caused by the external application of antimony, the professor denied that such could ever be the case. He also ridiculed the idea that any qualified medical man could have mistaken the symptoms exhibited by Mrs. Pritchard for those of gastric fever.

The Professor denied that such could be the case.

Dr. Littlejohn added to his testimony the statement that the experiences of the servants who had tasted the egg-flip and cheese were quite in accord with the supposition that those articles had been doctored with antimony tartrate. The drug was a white powder, and could easily be mixed with sugar without altering the appearance of the article.

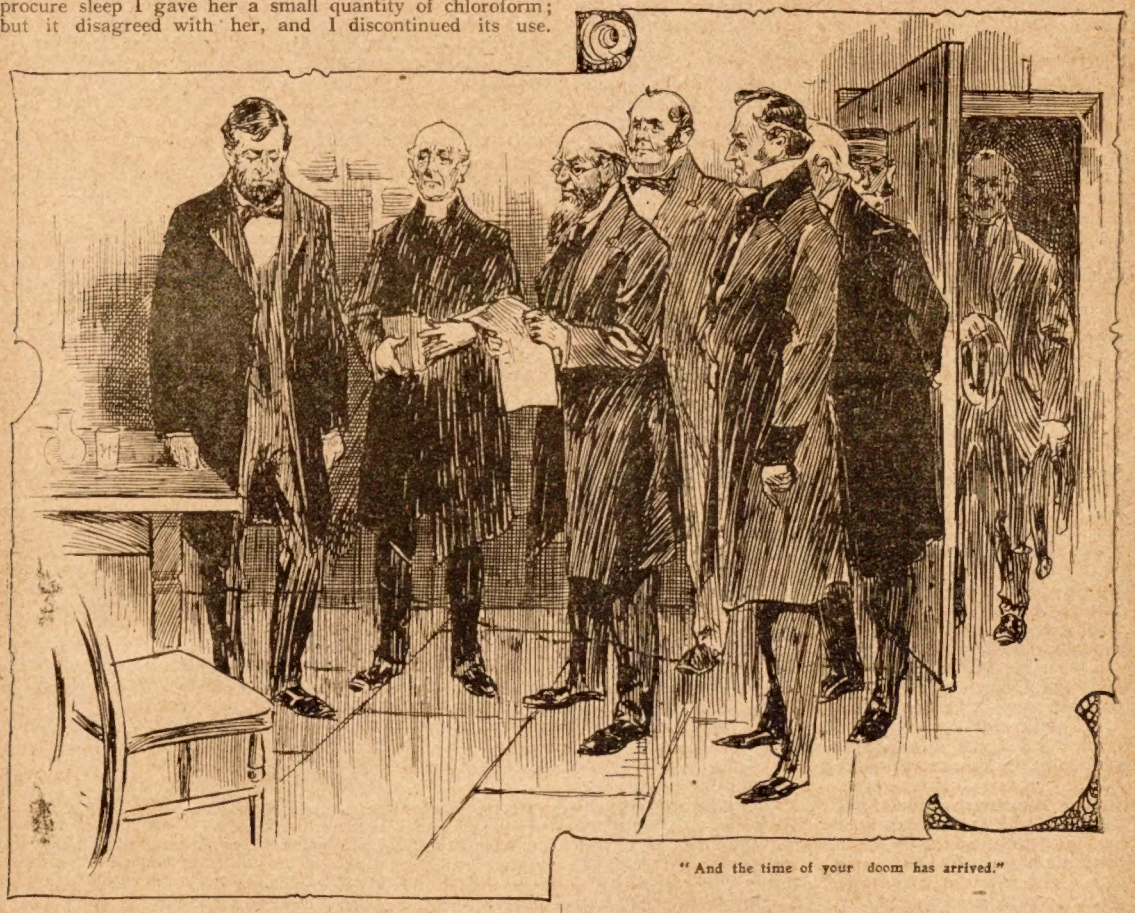
For the defence, Mr. Clarke tried hard to get the doctors to admit that in the case of Mrs. Taylor the symptoms might have been the result of an overdose of opium; but the experts would have none of it, and stoutly maintained that antimony and aconite alone could have caused the symptoms exhibited.

But for such a brutal murder, for so deliberate a crime, there must have been some reason. The prosecution tried to adduce something which would at least seem a reasonable

cause for the action of the prisoner; but only the very flimsiest of motives could be suggested. The prisoner was overdrawn at his bank, and had hopes that by the death of his mother-in-law he would benefit. That lady had about £3,000 at her disposal, and out of that sum she had lent to Dr. Pritchard the sum of £500 in the early part of 1864. On the death of his mother-in-law it was found that a life interest in £2,000 had been left to his wife, and a clause inserted to the effect that if she died before the doctor he was to have the interest of the sum during his lifetime.

The statement which the prisoner made before the magistrate was then read in court. It was very long, but its esential parts are as follows:

"As far as my judgment goes, my wife's last illness was gastric fever. I gave her no medicines during her illness excepting champagne and brandy to support her strength. I trusted to nature to right itself. In order to procure sleep I gave her a small quantity of chloroform; but it disagreed with her, and I discontinued its use.



"And the time of your doom has arrived."

Shortly after her mother's death she became much worse. I consulted Dr. Paterson, who gave a prescription containing mercury, which seemed to have a beneficial effect. I afterwards, at her suggestion, applied a solution of atropine to the external parts around the eye, and it had a little effect for some time. On the night preceding her death I went for Dr. Paterson, who saw her, and gave her a prescription.

"After supper I found her awake, and she asked me to come to bed, as I must be tired with the weary nights of watching. It was then about twelve, and almost immediately I fell asleep with exhaustion. I was awoke by a pulling at my beard, and found my wife struggling to get into bed. She said, 'Edward, I am faint.' I assisted her into bed, and asked if she had any pain. She said that she felt cold, and that I need try no more skill, for she was going to join her mother. I got alarmed, and rang the bell violently for the youngest servant, who came, and I told her to make a mustard plaster, and, on that, my wife turned round and said, 'Edward, I am in my senses; mustard plasters will do no good,' and almost immediately fell back in my arms and died.

"During the whole course of her illness, I never gave her any antimony nor any medicine which contained any preparation of antimony. Antimony is used occasionally to subdue inflammation, and in October last I applied it to her neck externally when she was troubled with a swelling of a gland. I rubbed it in externally. I have never given it to her since."

On another occasion the doctor added to his declaration, saying that he was in no way accessory to the death of Mrs. Taylor, that he had never administered poison to her, and that he still believed that she had died from apoplexy.

For the defence a few witnesses were called, chiefly chemists, who said that it was not an unknown thing for a medical man to purchase an ounce of antimony tartrate at once; and Dr. Michael Taylor, who said that the deceased Mrs. Pritchard had told him that it was at her own request that the visits of Dr. Gairdner were discontinued, as she objected to have strangers about her. That ended the case, as far as witnesses were concerned.

The Solicitor-General pointed out to the jury that the murder must have been committed by one of two persons, the prisoner or Mary M'Leod. The poisoning had commenced before Patterson had come, and continued after Lattimer had left. What did a servant-girl in her teens know of the action of antimony? There was evidence of a skilled medical man throughout the whole case. An inexperienced person would give poison in one, or, at the most, two, doses; in this case the poison had been administered in a succession of small doses. Could Mary M'Leod have known that that was the way to produce the surest effect with antimony tartrate? But if Mary was the culprit, how was it that a case of poisoning which was so apparent to Dr. Paterson was not noticed by the prisoner? Did not that point to the prisoner not being surprised at his own handiwork? It was useless to say that the prisoner was fond of his wife, for his relations with his servant-maid proved that he had no real affection for her, added to which there was a paltry pecuniary motive. He wished the jury to see that Dr. Pritchard, and he alone, could have com-

mitted the murder, and asked them to bring in a verdict to that effect.

On behalf of Dr. Pritchard, Mr. Clark said that it was impossible for the jury to accept the evidence of Mary M'Leod, since she was most probably the actual culprit. She had everything to gain by the death of her mistress, for she believed that she would step into her place. Everything which had been given to the two dead people had been through the hands of the servant-girl, and she had ample opportunity of putting the poison into the food and drinks. The antimony was kept in the consulting-room in an unlocked cupboard, and Mary could easily have gained possession of it if she had been so minded. In a case of this sort direct proof was wanted, and he claimed that there was not a particle of evidence to show that Dr. Pritchard had placed any poison into the various vehicles which the prosecution said had been used to administer the fatal food.

He asked the jury to believe that Dr. Paterson was prejudiced against the prisoner because he had never been called in to see him, and pointed out to them that it was incredible that Dr. Paterson could have believed that Mrs. Pritchard was being poisoned with antimony since he did not at once give notice to the police that the poor woman's life might be saved. He contended that it was only after the result of the post-mortem examination had been made known that Dr. Paterson thought of the very existence of the drug antimony, and that he had wilfully coloured his evidence to excuse himself and procure the downfall of his professional rival. He said that after the prosecution had virtually fixed the guilt on M'Leod, they declared that she was not guilty, and that, therefore the prisoner must be, and he claimed an acquittal for his client.

In summing up, the Lord Justice Clerk at once declared to the jury his firm conviction that Dr. Paterson had not displayed any partiality in giving his evidence, and certainly was in no way affected by the motives which the defence had ascribed to him, and this, he said, was self-evident since the doctor's own behaviour in the case was not entirely without blame. He should have communicated to the police when first his suspicions were aroused. He next reviewed the evidence, carefully reading copious extracts from his notes. Then the judge turned to the question of Mary M'Leod. He said that the prosecution laid the blame on the prisoner, the defence on the servant, but neither had suggested that both might have been implicated in the terrible crime. If that was the real solution of the case, what was the girl's guilt? Was it likely that she was the instigator of the crime? Was it probable that she even knew the name of antimony tartrate?

It seemed to him incredible that a girl of seventeen could have conceived and executed such a design, but if the prisoner was the guilty party, it was well within the bounds of possibility that Mary might have been one of the unconscious agents by which he carried out his fell purpose. If both were implicated, every argument which Mr. Clark used against the servant told equally against the master. The solution of the case rested with the jury.

The jury only took an hour to come to their decision, and returned into court with a verdict of "Guilty of both charges libelled." Then the Lord Justice Clerk assumed the black cap and proceeded to pass sentence. He pointed out to Pritchard the cruelty of his conduct and the callousness with which he had watched his wife fade away before his eyes, giving her the traitor's kiss at night, lying in bed with her, carrying on all the domestic duties of everyday life as if he was a friend, when all the time he was her enemy. He murdered Mrs. Taylor, doubtless, for a small gain, he did his wife to death for the same paltry reason, and he tried to fix the guilt of his diabolic conduct on an innocent servant girl whom he had first seduced and thus ruined for life.

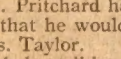
He had little doubt that Dr. Pritchard had thought that by laying the guilt on the shoulders of Mary M'Leod he would easily get out of his entanglement with her, and had carefully arranged that suspicion should fall on her rather than on anybody else. Then he pronounced the sentence of death in the Scots' form, reading from a paper signed by all the three judges. "The sentence of this court is that you, Edward Pritchard, be taken from hence to the prison at Glasgow, and there, on the morning of July the 28th next, between the hours of six and noon, be taken to a place of execution, there to be hanged by the neck until you be dead; and that when you are dead your body be buried within the precincts of the prison where you shall last have been confined before your execution. And this is pronounced for Doom. And may God Almighty have mercy on your soul!"

Pritchard was at once removed from the dock, and, the same night, conveyed to Glasgow, where he was lodged in the cells of the doomed. For the first few days he was depressed and dazed, but then, when he was assured that there was not the least hope of a reprieve being granted, he admitted that he had poisoned his wife, but declared that he was innocent of the death of Mrs. Taylor. A week before his execution, however, he made another confession, and said that he had also poisoned his mother-in-law, and had intended to lay the blame on Mary M'Leod. He admitted that the theory of the prosecution was the right one, but that he did not commit the murders for pecuniary gain. He could not say what led him to do the deeds, but thought it was a species of madness consequent on the immoderate use of spirits. That part of his hypothesis was proved to be untrue, as he was well-known to be a temperate man, and it was suggested that the hint as to madness was given in the hopes that he might be reprieved as insane; but it was not to be.

On the morning of the 28th of July, at eight o'clock, he was waited on by the sheriffs and other officials, and his sentence again read over to him, concluding with the awful words, "And the time of your doom has arrived." Then the executioner was brought into the cell, and proceeded to pinion the doctor, who made no resistance, but stared wildly round the room. The executioner, who was a novice at the business, wanted to cut off some of Pritchard's long beard, but, with an effort, the doctor asked him to desist, saying that if he passed the noose under it, it would not get in the way. The melancholy procession then started for the place of execution, which was over the gaol door, and scarcely a minute elapsed before Dr. Pritchard made his appearance on the drop, and was greeted with groans and hoots from the dense throng which had assembled to see his end. The rope was placed round his neck, the warders stepped back, and the executioner stole into the prison to operate the mechanism of the drop. The chaplain was reading the prayers, when the unhappy man was heard to murmur, "Tell Mary to forgive me. Lord Jesus receive my spirit!" At that instant the floor gave way, and the sickening thud of the falling body was drowned by the plaudits of the spectators. Dr. Pritchard died almost instantaneously. An hour later he was in his coffin, and, two hours afterwards, resting in a felon's grave.

After his execution, it leaked out that, at an earlier stage of his career, Dr. Pritchard had had a mysterious fire at his house, and a poor servant girl was burned to death. Following this fire, the doctor made a fraudulent claim on the insurance company, which, of course, was rejected, and the matter allowed to drop. But the police had long had their eyes on him, and even if Mrs. Pritchard had not died when she did, it is highly probable that he would have been arrested later for the murder of Mrs. Taylor.

One thing cannot help striking us in this case. It does seem strange that the law should condemn to a rapid, painless death, alike the man who in a fit of passion sweeps his enemy off the earth at one blow, and the slow poisoner who gloats for months over his vile work, as did Dr. Pritchard.



THE means by which clues are given to the perpetrator of some foul deed is often strange. Here is a little example which we have found in looking through our notebooks. In the early portion of the year 1818 a tax collector named Martin was returning to his home at Bilguy, in France, along the high road, when he was suddenly encountered by a man who instantly shot him, robbed him, and decamped. There was no trace by which the murderer could be tracked, but close to the body one of the gendarmes picked up a blackened piece of paper and conveyed it with the corpse to the mortuary. An examination of the body showed that the unfortunate tax gatherer had been shot through the heart and that a small piece of paper was found adhering to the edge of the wound. It then seemed probable that the paper had been used as a wad for the gun, and that found on the body had been wrapped round the bullet, for both pieces were similar. Though blackened and worn, several words could be deciphered which were obviously connected with the glass-blowing trade, and a date some fifteen years previous was made out. On this, the police went to all the nearest glass blowers and demanded to examine their books, with the result that a corresponding entry was found in one of the ledgers, and the goods had been invoiced to Mr. Martin's son-in-law, who had only returned to France, after an absence of ten years, shortly before the day of the tragedy. On this they arrested him, and he was so astonished at the method by which his guilt had been suspected that he confessed his crime and was duly executed.

A countryman, being a witness in a court of justice, was asked if he was born in wedlock. "Noa, sir," was the reply; "I wur born in Devonshire."

"Man is an apprentice; pain is his mas'e'; and none knows himself so long as he has not suffered."—A. DE MUSSET.

CHAPTER II.

LAST week we described the various forms of whips and cats which have from time to time been used to torture unhappy persons who were either suspected of having committed some offence or odious to those in power. It is seldom that we hear of an Englishman making use of the whip as other than a purely penal weapon, but the annals do bear the name of one of high degree who suffered the extreme penalty for flogging a man to death. That miscreant was Governor Wall.

Wall was an officer in the Army about the year 1770, but no record has been found of his actual rank in the forces; nevertheless, he must have been a person of some importance, for, in July, 1782, he was acting as Lieutenant-Governor of Senegambia.

During his tenure of office a small mutiny broke out in the little garrison which supported British prestige in Senegambia, and Wall felt it his duty to quell this immediately. Unfortunately for him, he went about this in the wrong way. Singling out one of the ringleaders—a soldier named Armstrong, against whom the governor had a strong dislike—he ordered him to receive eight hundred lashes. This was strictly illegal, because the man had never been tried by any court. To add to the severity of the sentence, Wall directed that the regulation cat—a weapon in almost daily use in the Army in those days—should not be used, but that a thick piece of knotted rope should take its place.

Not satisfied with having thus "improved" on the punishment, Governor Wall caused a fresh flogger to be called in after each twenty-five lashes, to ensure that the victim received the full force of each blow, and, mindful that the drummers of the regiment, who usually were employed to do the military whippings, might have a little sympathy for Armstrong, he selected a number of negroes to inflict the flogging.

The poor soldier was lashed to a gun-carriage and the troops were mustered round. Wall was present himself and directed the black whippers, stimulating them to fresh energy by cries of "Cut the blackguard to the heart! Cut the liver out of him! Harder! harder!"

The whole of the eight hundred strokes were administered at once, and, unconscious, Armstrong was taken to the cantonment hospital, where he died in five days. One of the apothecaries who received him stated later that the man's back was bloated, raw, and black, and resembled a piece of stale bullock's liver.

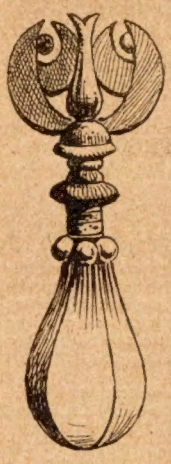
Wall fled from Senegambia and hid on the Continent for more than thirteen years, in spite of a reward being offered for his capture. Then he returned to England and eventually gave himself up. The jury found him guilty, and, though strenuous efforts were made to get the sentence commuted, Governor Wall met his end on the scaffold.

With regard to the abolition of torture under English rule, it is interesting to recall that one of England's most famous generals was brought to trial and found guilty of inflicting pain upon a negress for the purpose of extracting evidence. Sir Thomas Picton, who won great fame at Waterloo some nine years afterwards, and died as he shouted "Charge! Hurrah! Charge!" was tried in 1806 for, whilst Governor of Trinidad, subjecting a woman to the picquet. The sufferer was supported by a rope attached to one arm and the great toe of one foot, which rested on a sharp stake driven into the ground. The female in this case was stated to have borne terrible pain, and the affair caused an immense sensation, particularly in Army circles, where the case was discussed in all its bearings. News then took a long time to travel, and men who had served under Picton waited long and anxiously for the result of the trial. Sir Thomas was found guilty, despite his defence that what he had done was in strict accordance with Spanish law;

Bell Collar.

but in consideration of his great reputation no sentence was passed upon him. Perhaps in this case the judges exercised a very wise discretion, for Sir Thomas lived to fight gloriously in the Peninsular and in the Belgian wars, when Napoleon made his final effort to dominate Europe.

The bell collar which we illustrate is a Venetian contrivance, devilish in its ingenuity. To the rough iron collar which was clasped round the neck of the prisoner a rod was attached projecting over the head and holding a bell. It was thus impossible for a prisoner to move without giving notice to his gaolers; but these inventive gentry found another use for the instrument. They amused themselves by keeping their prisoner awake, and anyone who has experienced want of sleep for twenty-four hours when engaged in some active occupation will have a dim idea of what it means to be kept thus day and night in a lonely cell with nothing but one's thoughts and the ever-jangling bell for a companion. Prisoners subjected to this refined form of torture generally became insane within a very short time.



Mouth Pear.

Spaniards have always been noted for their cruelty, and it is certain that the blood-thirsty individual who invented the gag shown in our illustration was a genius in his own particular line. It is known to history as the "Spanish mouth pear," and it is made of iron, in sections, so that it may be squeezed together into the shape of the fruit from which it takes its name. It was used to stifle the cries of those condemned to torture, or for people seized and immured to gratify a private revenge. The implement was forced into the mouth, and then by touching a screw sections sprang apart, the mouth was distended, and the victim could utter no sound. Sometimes the pear had a device attached to it for lacerating the tongue and throat, and it is probable that those to whom this specimen was applied never afterwards recovered the power of speech.

Iron Collar.

Next we have the necklet, a form of which is used in China at the present day. The collar illustrated is a sharply-toothed band of iron, attached to which are leather straps which meet in, and are fastened to, a ring. With his neck clasped in this contrivance a prisoner was slung up to a beam, the rope being attached to the straps, and there, with the teeth sticking into his flesh and his toes just touching the ground, he remained until his torturers were satisfied, which was when they had obtained the evidence or the confession they wanted.

Spiked Collar.

A Spanish variety of this collar is a hideously cruel device. The article is completely studded on the outside, inside, and edges with sharp iron spikes. The wearer was placed in a dungeon, and knew no rest, sleeping or waking, standing, sitting, or lying. His face and head would be terribly lacerated in a short time, and it was only the extremely hardy who could withstand the torture for any length of time.

We have said that a similar punishment to the first collar mentioned is in use in China even now. There the offender is placed in a cage, through the top of which his head protrudes, and which is just high enough to allow his toes to touch the ground. In that position the criminal stays until justice is satisfied.

Sometimes it happens that the victim dies before this occurs; but that is a detail too trivial for the Oriental mind to bother about.

Next week we will tell of the Horrors of the Rack, and the Awful Agony of the Water Torture.

COLONEL BOND who had sat as one of the judges in the trial of King Charles I., died a day or two before Cromwell, who, it was generally reported, was also dead. "No, no," said a gentleman, who was better informed; "he has only given bond to the devil for his future appearance."

Criminal Problems

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE OUR PRISON DISCIPLINE?

HAVING seen the faults which are most glaring in our present method of dealing with offenders against law and order, what can be done to remedy them? First and foremost, the principle on which the entire system is founded must be changed. Society has learnt by now that there is no hope of reforming a convict by fear; prison has few terrors for the habitual criminal. At the same time, the community has a duty towards the wrongdoer as well as towards itself.

The ideal penal code is one which will transform the worthless and harmful member of society into a useful unit in the great social system, and which will do so at the least expense to the public and with the least inconvenience to the wrongdoer, where his offence has been partly the result of circumstances.

To do this, anything like a rigidly fixed code of punishments meted out to each crime is impossible, and a wide distinction must be made between the first offender and the person who voluntarily seeks to renew his acquaintance with the inside of the penal establishments.

We have said that society has a duty towards the criminal. It is bound, under all laws of sociology, to attempt to fit him to resist temptation, to remove from him his tendency to commit breaches of the law, and to assist him to earn an honest livelihood. By so doing the community also discharges its obligation to itself, for the success of a nation depends in great measure on the workers.

How is this desirable end to be obtained? It has been proposed that when a man falls under the ban of the law he should be sent to prison, and there induced to reform himself. This is to be done by placing him in the lowest class of convicts at first. When he shows signs of improvement it is suggested that he should be raised to a higher class, and from thence transferred into the highest group of reformed. No definite sentence is to be passed on him, his stay in prison depending solely on the progress he makes towards regeneration. The employment to which he is put must be at once remunerative to the State and at the same time one by which the reformed character can earn his living when he leaves his enforced seclusion. In the selection of these employments, then, the greatest discrimination must be used, for it would assuredly be useless to teach a forger boot-making, when he could with profit be turned into an engraver of the highest class, while a coster would certainly fail to make sufficient money to support himself as a mechanical engineer.

Solitary confinement, except in particular cases, should be abolished, but again discretion must be used in selecting companions for those detained. Furthermore, the vast experience of prison chaplains has taught them that in very many cases the evil-doer can be reclaimed through his family, and ample opportunity should be given for the humanising influence of wife and children to operate. By these means the prisoner would be induced to work out his own salvation, knowing that his liberty depends on his own efforts.

But, having temporarily changed the character of the criminal, he must not be allowed to revert to his former mode of life. Work must be found for him before he is liberated, else he will assuredly recommence his nefarious trade. Philosophy and moral advice and maxims have little weight when the stomach is calling for food and when those he loves are starving. In this direction the Rev. Horsley did good work, and it is ever to be regretted that, on the abolition of Cold Bath Fields gaol, that excellent divine was permitted to retire from his labours.

But should the "reformed" character again become amenable to the laws of the country, how is he to be treated? A longer period in the lowest class in prison, more irksome restrictions—not vindictively enforced, but sufficiently stringent to make him appreciate the benefits of freedom, better evidences of his improved moral character required before he is again let loose upon the world, would, in many cases, effect a cure. Should, however, these salutary methods fail, the question of dealing with the habitual offender is a difficult one. Some criminologists boldly affirm that when a man has become a burden to the State he should be killed as a noxious animal, while others declare that he should be kept to remunerative labour of an unpleasant nature for an indefinite period, the hope being always present that one day he may see the error of his ways and possibly become a profitable member of society. It is quite within the bounds of possibility that these latter theorists may be right, for where a criminal, however hardened, has the hope of release before him, it is difficult to imagine that he would deteriorate instead of improve, while if his labour is remunerative he is not actually a burden on the purses of the tax-payers.

For all this to be carried out efficiently the old military system must vanish from the houses of detention, and the unintelligent warder and officer be replaced by specialists who have had a special training. In other words, every prison should become an adult reformatory, and the figures issued by the inspector of reformatory schools for youths and young girls leads us to believe that, with certain modifications which we have outlined, the scheme would operate beneficially with the adult. During three years the total number of boys discharged from British reformatories was 8,066, of whom 178 died. Eighty-two and a half of the remainder are doing well, only 4½ per cent. have been re-convicted, and the remainder lost sight of. With girls equally encouraging results have been obtained—83 per cent. are doing well, while only one has been again brought before the magistrates.

The experiment is worth trying, on a small scale at first, and there is really no reason why in a few years a marked reduction in crime should not take place.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Leaves from Our Notebook.

CRIMINOLOGISTS have frequently noticed how years vary in the classes of crimes which predominate. For instance, in 1877 twenty-three persons were executed for murder, while in 1871 only three suffered the extreme penalty of the law. Burglary and forgery vary in the same way.

THE natives of India have rather a curious custom by means of which they claim to discover a guilty party, and as mention of it is found in the very oldest Oriental manuscripts we may with safety conclude that it constitutes the earliest form of ordeal. The suspected persons are summoned to meet, and to each is handed a little dry, uncooked rice. At the same time they are informed that the guilty man will be unable to swallow his rice. Curiously enough, fear of discovery frequently prevents the flow of saliva necessary to effect the swallowing of dry rice, and thus the culprit is declared.

AUGUST 19, 1763, was a day of terror in London. Just about midday the sky became suddenly overcast, and the gloom deepened until it was as dark as night, while a terrific storm, accompanied by thunder and lightning, raged over the metropolis. Everybody was firmly convinced that the Day of Judgment had arrived, and many fled to the churches. At that very moment a large crowd had assembled on Kensington Common to witness the execution of a highwayman, but the proximity of the end of the world made the spectators soft-hearted, and when the cart drove up containing the wretched criminal the mob howled and shouted to the sheriff not to hang a man when in a few minutes he would share in the general cataclysm. Every time that the sheriff and hangman tried to tie up the convict the mob made a rush and stopped the proceedings, but the sheriff had agreed to hang the man, and hang him he would. So he sent for a force of soldiers to guard the scaffold, and at length the sentence was duly carried out. Soon after the body had been cut down the sky cleared up again, the churches were deserted as before, and the crowd on the common decided that, after all, the culprit must have been a very great blackguard and richly deserved to be sent to his account.

THE semi-Oriental inhabitants of the south-east of Europe have always had a reputation for brutality, and even in recent times they cannot be forced to resort to humane methods of punishment. Only towards the end of last year a most revolting spectacle was witnessed at an execution of a peasant, named Kamenow, at Widdin, in Bulgaria. The culprit was being led to the scaffold when he suddenly produced a dagger, which he had managed to conceal about his person, and stabbed three warders and a soldier before he could be overpowered. With great brutality he was dragged to the gallows, which was most primitive, and was turned off. The rope broke, and a fresh one was procured, all the while the officials heaping reproaches on the unhappy criminal. A second attempt was made to carry out the sentence, but again the rope broke. Getting infuriated, the gaoler gave orders that the remains of the second rope would have to suffice for the execution, and then these kindly Bulgarians made a fresh noose, pushed Kamenow's head through it, and then held him in position, while he was slowly strangled, fearing that the entire weight of his body might again sever the cord! The spectators were rather amused at this novel method of hanging a man.

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